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"WHEN LIGHTNING STRIKES."

A COMEDY DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

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BY

MIRON LEFFINGWELL.

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BY

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THE CHICAGO MANUSCRIPT.,

431 N. CLARK ST.,

CHICAGO, ILL.,

PS3523
E37WS
1911

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"WHEN LIGHTNING STRIKES"

A Comedy Drama in Four Acts

by

MIRON LEFFINGWELL.

Cast.

"Dicky" Bird----------Who has just left Yale.

John Hayward----------Back from Idaho.

Pelham Haynes----------A Leading Citizen.

Edward Middleton----------An "Undesirable."

Silas Screwby----------Old Tight Wad Si.

Jere Blossom----------A Sleuth.

Mary Hanes----------A Modern Cinderella.

Florence----------Her Half sister.

Rose Summers----------Mary's Spinster Aunt.

-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-

S Y N O P S I S

Act 1:-
Library and reception room in the Haynes Mansion.

Act 2:- Garden and grounds of the Hayne's Mansion.

Act 3:-
Miss Summers' Cottage.

Act 4:-
Same as Act 1. Library in the Haynes' Mansion.

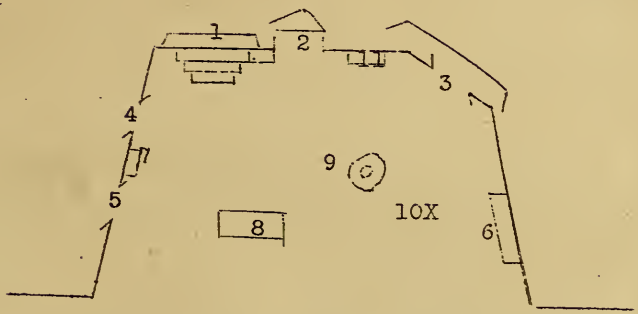
Scene:- A small town in the Middle West.
Time:-- The Present.

---oooOOOOOOOooo---

Act First.

SCENE:-- Library and reception room in the Haynes' Mansion.

Diagram



EXPLANATION

(1) Arch R.U. steps leading up to same. Platform running off R. Interior Backing. (2) Large French window C. with curtains drawn back. (3) Door L.U.E. obliqued. Interior backing. (4) Door R.3.E. (5) Door R.2.E. Interior backings. (6) Large fireplace with grate. (7) Handsome desk R. (8) Large library table with chairs. (9) Handsome divan C. (10) Arm chair by fireplace. (11) Book cases and cabinets. Pictures on walls, one with wire to break. Ornamental and "irons" and scuttle with coal ornamental furniture. On the table down R. thre are bottles, drinking glasses emply syphons, cigar box, half smoked stumps of cigars and playing cards scattered. Some of the cards have fallen to the floor, one of the chairs overturned. The room is in a state of mild disorder.

---oooOOOOOOOOOooo---

Act 1st.

At rise:-- Mary is discovered with carpet sweeper near fireplace. She wears a gingham apron. Sound of buzzard heard off L.U.E. Mary exits L.U.E. Pause, rumble of distant thunder heard.

Mary

(Re-appearing) Come in Aunt Rose! Come in! (Rose Summers, a spinster of uncertain age enters. She is dressed rather youthfully and maries a coquetishness of manner with a grimness and sourness of speech at times.) This visit is a surprise and a pleasure.

Rose

Maybe, and then again, maybe not. There's a storm coming up, and I didn't want my new hat to be spoiled.

Mary

I can understand that, Aunty. It is most becoming.

Rose

Humph! I hope you mean what you say. (Pausing before seating herself on divan C.)

Mary

I certainly, do Aunty.

Rose

I hope so, I should hate to think of you my sister's child growing up into one of those deceitful "cats". (Sniffing) Phew! This room smells like a bar-room, or (Coughs) What I imagine a bar-room would smell like. The stale tobacco smoke nauseating, the peoria odor of alchohol reminiscent ofa joint session of the legislature and --(Picking up several playing cards. Looking at them) Leaves from the devil's bible. It seems to me, Mary, that an "orgie" has been taking place here.

Mary

Oh, I'll have it all clearned up in a minute, Aunty. (Gets waste basket from under desk R.commences to clear table of glasses and empty bottles, placing them in basket.) I'll open the window, and air the room! (Starts up stage. Distant thunder heard)

Rose

(Starts) Come away from that window. Don't open it.

Mary

Eh? (In surprise) Why not, Aunty?

Rose

Do you want to see me a gibbering maniac? You know I'm afraid of thunder and lightning. Would you have me, your mother's sister expire before your very eyes with Nervous Prostation?

Mary

I only wanted to "freshen" things up.

Rose

Don't you get "too fresh" while I'm about, young ~~man~~ woman! Answer me, who has been guilty of this debanch?(Indicates table)

Mary

Well, you see, father --

Rose

(Interrupting her) What, Pelham Haynes, empties all those bottles.

Mary

Oh dear no, he had several guests, Mr. Middleton, and --

Rose

Middleton? Humph! I've no use for that man at all.

Mary

Then there was Mr. Bird, who I understand is boarding with you.

Rose

What? Mr. Bird? That innocent and unsophisticed child? Your father ought to be ashamed of himself endeavoring to corrupt the morals of "Dicky Bird" who is only an ingenuous cherub, and wholly ignorant of all vice and has never ventured on the primrose path which leads to perdition.

Mary

Ahem! I understand that "Dicky" bird as you call him spent three years at Yale and was requested by the faculty ot leave.

Rose

The victim of a jealous conspiracy, no doubt. (Gushingly) Ah, if you had looked into Dicky's eyes as I have done and have seen the light of truth shining there. Ah, those eyes, those eyes, which mirror his untatined and guileless soul. Ah, me! (Sighs) But your father old in dissipation shall not lure this innocent from the paths of rectitude, if I - Rose Summers can prevent it.

Mary

Aunt Rosy, don't speak ill of my father.

Rose

How can I speak well of him? Once the richest man in town, what position does he hold now? His once ample fortune almost completely scattered by his extravagance and wild speculations.

Mary

Father never pretended to be a man of business, but he's a good man for all that. Try in justice Aunty, to forget his faults when you contemplate his virtues.

Rose

Virtues? Fiddlesticks! Justice? Piffle! If Pelham Haynes ever gets what's coming to him, when he leaves this sinful world, he won't have any use for winter underclothes. It makes me boil all over when I think how he treated your poor mother, and how he is treating you.

Mary

Why he doesn't ill treat me, Aunty.

Rose

Does he treat you as he treats your half sister, Florence? His child by his second marriage? Here you are doing house maid's work and she's always on the "gallivant." She flirts around in Paris frocks, and wearing "sinful" hats, and you're done up in a gingham apron. You're Cinderella and Florence is the Queen of She-ba --

Mary

Somebody has to do the work, Aunty. You know we have no servant now.

Rose

Why haven't you, tell me that?

Mary

Why we have to economize, you know we owe a lot of money and --

Rose

"We?" "We" owe a lot of money, don't talk to me of "we". I know the whole state of affairs. This house is mortgaged from cellar to roof. It's talked of all over town. Old Screwby has commended fore-closure proceedings, a pretty state of affairs, you're all facing up. There's your father facing financial ruin, knows nothing about money except how to throw it away. There's that butterfly Florence your half sister --

Mary

No more about Florence, Aunty. She's very dear to me. (Pelham enters R.3.E. stands listening)

Rose

(Sniffs) The empty headed doll would be a "dear" investment to anyone. She carrying on a flirtation with that Middleton fellow, a creature of your father's type, only worse, and now I've got to come to yourself. You have been meeting that John Hayward who's just back from Idaho to the mortification of all our friend and scandal of the whole town.

Mary

(Defiantly) And what if I have met him? He loves me sincerely, and I - I love him.

Rose

You love a murderer?

Mary

John is no murderer. He was acquitted by a jury of his euals, who refused to believe the charge and would not accept the manufacutred and prejured evidence against him.

Rose

Lots of people here in his home town believe him guilty.

Mary

That is because they're heartless, cruel. They're like a pack of wolves who scent the blood of the wounded stage and trial him to his death. They point the finger of suspicion at John because he returns poor, because he's what they term a failure. He never was concerned in the assassination of Idaho's ex-governor. He was freed by the law of the land. He protests his innocence before God and by the love he bears me. And by the love I bear him. I believe him. Wherever he goes, I am ready to go too, to cheer him in adversity, even if I have to give up all the rest of the world beside.

Pelham

Very eloquent, but hardly practical, Mary. You can't go against public opinion. A stigma has been placed on John Hayward's character, which can never beeffaced. I would hardly care to receive the gentleman as a son-in-law. If you have been meeting him by surreptitiously, stop it and stop it at once, or you will compel me to use harsh measures. (Turns to Rose) Good evening Miss Summers, somewhat of a surprise to find you here beneath my roof.

Rose

(Snappishly) I'm some what surprised to find myself here.

Pelham

Yes, your visits like "angels" are few and far between.

Rose

There's not much of the angel about me.

Pelham

Yes, so I've always observed. Clear awway this truck, Mary. (Pointing to basket containing bottles etc. Mary gets dust pan and brushes the cigar stumps, ashes etc. into pan. Picks up basket in one hand, carries pan in the other, about to exit R.2.E)

Pelham

Wait a minute! Is there a drink left in any of these bottles? (Mary stops. Pelham as she ix examining bottles, comes over to her impatiently). Oh, damn it! You'll take all night over it. Let me see!(He picks the bottles over, finds one) Ah, here's

one! (Takes it and glass over to table) All right, you may go. (Mary exits R.2.E.)

Pelham

(Pours out drink) Sorry there isn't more, or I'd ask you to join me, Miss Summers.

Rose

(Sniffs indignantly) You know I never trifle with the "demon."

Pelham

I didn't know . It's been so long since I kept any cases on you, and I thought that with your advancing years, you might have broken loose.

Rose

(Horrified) Broken loose?

Pelham

Lots of old girls are "periodicals". They stub their "toe" quite regularly.

Rose

(Half to herself) Ribald Ruffian!

Pelham

Your very good health, Rose! (Drinks) Um-ah! I needed that. Well, I guess I'm up for the day.

Rose

(Aside) Lazy beast!

Pelham

Eh, what's that?

Rose

(Sarcastically) Do you usually begin your day at half past six in the evening?

Pelham

No, I generally wait until half past eight, but Mary made such a noise in tidying up this room, that she awakened me, and I had a horrible night of it. Never saw such infernal luck in my life. By the way that young fellow living at your house, old "Tight Wad Screwly's portege" he's a "vulture."

Rose

What? Pelham Haynes, if you are referring to Mr. Dicky Bird--

Pelham

Yes, he's a bird all right.

Rose

You are a wicked man to speak that way of an innocent "cherub" and after getting him to keep late hours, tempting him to drink.

Pelham

Tempting him? (Laughs) Ha! Ha! Ha!

Rose

And teaching him to gamble.

Pelham

Teaching him? Do you know he carried off all the money in the house last night?

Rose

I'm glad to hear it, but I venture to say what money he could carry away feom this house now, wouldn't make him round shouldered. You've brought your affairs to a pretty pass, Pelham Haynes. (Middleton comes down steps at back R.U.E.)

Pelham

You'll pardon me Rose Summers if I suggest that it's no business of yours what II do with my own affairs.

Rose

Well, I'll make it mine, when I see my dead sister's child made a drudge by you and neglected, while you pamper Florence, your daughter by your second marriage.

Pelham

Hold your tongue!

Rose

(Belligerent) You try and make me hold it, you just try! It's your favortism that you show Florence and your neglect of Mary that's driving that poor girl into Jack Hayward's arms. She yearns for affection, which you with hold from her. Won't it be a beautiful thing if she should marry this man, who has been tried for his life and is discredited, and suspected by every ne here in his home town? What would her poor mother say if she was alive, and thatbrings me to something else. What has become of Mary's inheritance left her by my sister? Have you squandered that on yourself and Florence? You were made trustee of that fund. What have you done with your money?

Pelham

None of your damned business.

Rose

Well, I'll just make it my "damned" business. Mary's not of age and I'll have her thrown into chancery, probably you tell the court then it's none of their damned business, maybe and then again, maybe not.

Pelham

Leave my house.

Rose

I will and I'll throw Mary into chancery.

Pelham

Go throw yourself in the river and wash off your war paint.

Rose

"War paint?" Ugh! you vulgar villianous, venomous, viper! I scorn you! (Exits L.U.E.)

Middleton

(Coming down) And who is that "dar" old lady?

Pelham

(Turns sharply) Oh, you are here, eh?

Middleton

Oh yes, and somewhat interested in what I heard. Is that belligerent old beauty a relative?

Pelham

She's Mary's aunt.

Middleton

Oho! I see, so Mary is an heiress, eh? Fine girl, Mary, if she was properly frocked and all that. I've sort of neglected Mary.

Pelham

What are you driving at?

Middleton

Oh nothing in particular.

Pelham

You'd better speak out. I don't like ambiguous remarks. If you have anything on your mind, speak.

Muddleton

I will! (Pause) Haynes, you and I are two of a kind. We're an awful pair of four flushers. You invited me here to your house because you thought I had money and I came here in the mistaken belief that you were weel fixed. It appears that both of us live by our wits.

Pelham

Do you mean to say you have deceived me, that you are penniless?

Middleton

Not yet, but soon. I never could unassisted pay the milliner's and dress making bills of Florence. That pretty butterfly's wings need a lot of gilding as you know. Now I rather like you --

Pelham

(Sarcastically) Oh, do you?

Middleton

And I wouldn't mind accepting you as a father-in-law.

Pelham

Oh, you wouldn't?

Middleton

But Florence, in the light of developments is entirely our of the question. I wouldn't wrong her so much as to insist on her becoming Mrs. Middleton. Now Mary's inheritance makes her look different in my eyes and I trust you will see the advanta e on all sides of me trans ferring my attentions to her. What do you say?

Pelham

What do I say? Why I say that if I hadb't been credibly informed that your name was Edward Middleton, I would think I was listening th "~~XXx~~ Nervo, the Monk." And I will also further inform you ~~xxxxx~~ sir, that the sooner you take up your quarters elsewhere, the better I'll be pleased. You - you - (About to swear. Mary enters R.2.E.She has doffed her apron)

Middleton

(Sees Mary) I implore you, Mr. Haynes, don't be violent, and don't use profanity in the presence of your innocent child. (Middleton's assurance is toomuch for Haynes who starts and gasps and sinks into chair by fireplace. Mary commences to gather up playing cards which are scattered all over floor)

Middleton

Miss Mary, I hate to see you on your knees, let me pick these up for you.

Mary

Oh, I don't mind it at all, Mr. Middleton.

Middleton

Let me at least help you. (Falls on knees, commences to slowly gather up the cards. Middleton prolongs the business, he takes hold of the cards, Mary has already gathered and tries to take them from her. Mary resists good naturedly. Finally the cards fall on the floor again all scattdred. Florence enters in the middle of the bus., watches Middleton and Mary curiously and when he gathers up last card, she coughs)

Florence

Ahem! Hello Ned! What are you "up to"? I should say, "Down to?"

Middleton

(Carelessly and indfifferently) Good evening Miss Haynes! (Hands her pack of cards) Put these where they belong, won't you?

Florence

I would with pleasure, but I don't remember what pocket you usual carry them in.

Middleton

(Pause) I don't understand you, Miss Haynes!

Florence

Why aren't these cards the same ones you showed papa last night and suggested that they be used in the game where you were going to pick a bird of his feathers. I saw and overheard you just as I was going up to ned.

Pelham

Flossy, come here to me.

Florence

Yes, papa! Tell me, Ned, of what kind of bird were you speaking?

Middleton

What kind of bird? Why we thought he was a "dodo". He proved to be a cormorant. (The buzzard sounds)

Pelham

There's the buzzar, Mary. If it's anybody except that infernal Screwby, I'm not home.

Mary

Yes sir.

Middleton

(Restraining Mary) Wait a minute, Miss Mary, Pelham Haynes, it mortifies me exceedingly to have reprove a man so much older than myself, but in this case, I must speak.

Pelham

(Growls) What the devil's the matter with you?

Middleton

(Pompous ly) Is it not enough to condemn your child to all the menial tasks of your household while her sister sits pacidly in luxury and idleness, without saddling her pure and patient soul with deception and petty falsehood? If it isnecessary a lie should be told, I shall tell it. I will answer the buzzar myself. Falsehood is foreign in my nature, but Mary shall be spared a guilty blush while I have power to prevent it.

Mary

Mr. Middleton, please let me go, don't make me disoeby my father. (Breaks away from him)

Middleton

If you insist Mary, answer the buzzar, but I will accompany you. Come, we will go together. (Mary and Middleton exuent L.U.E.)

Pelham

Well, I'll be damned.

Florence

Papa!

Pelham

Pardonme, pet, but the insolence of that scoundrelly puppy exasperates me so that Icant pick my words.

Florence

What puppy, papa?

Pelham

That Middleton person!

Florence

Ned! My future husband a puppy!

Pelham

He's a rank imposter!

Florence

Oh papa! To speak so of one who hopes someday to call you father.

Pelham

If he ever calls me "father" I'll boil him in oil! He's here under false colors, the sneaking swindler! Your husband, indeed! Why, I'll murder him first. (Picks up "andiron." Shakes it.) I don't know what stopped me from braining him where he stood. (Flourishes andiron.)

Florence

Papa! Papa! Don't! Don't! (Dicky speaks outside)

Dicky

(Outside) Mr. Haynes not at home, eh? In that case, I'll just drop in and see him.

Middleton

(Outside) But - but --

Dicky

(Outside) But - but don't tell me to "butt". I'm not a goat. On your way. "Desperate Desmond", I defy you.

Florence

Oh papa! Here's some one, a stranger. Put that thing away, put it away. (To Pelham who is still flourishing the andiron.) You're frightening me to death! (Dicky enters L.U. E. carrying punching bag under one arm, set of gloves wrapped up under the other)

Dicky

What is this? Beauty in distress? Fear nothing "angel eyes", (Drops the boxing gloves, puts right arm around her waist) I am by your side. (She pushes him away and crosses to Pelham.) That is, I'd like to be by your side. Tell me, you peach faced fashion plate, what has this venerable rough, neck been trying to do to my presious "Spinky Waukee doodle bugs?" Tell me, and I, "Dicky Bird" will tear him joint by joint and strew the hungry church yard with his aged limbs.

Pelham

Are you aware sir, that we are father and daughter?

Dicky

What! Do you mean to say that you are his daughter? I mean (To Florence) Cherry lips! Are you his father?

Florence

We are related, sir.

Dicky

(Mournfully) Poor child! Poor child! But don't abandon hope, you may not be. We only may have kidnapped you in infancy and brought you up in ignorance of your true identity. Who knows. History abounds in such mysteries. I can see no points of resemblance between you.

Florence

Sir! Whatever your name be --

Dicky

"Dicky Bird", fairest of thy sex, and always at your command.

Florence

Well sir, I'll have you understand that I know he is my father and I'm proud of him.

Dicky

Ahem! It's the wise child that knows its own father.

Pelham

Come down to business and stop all this fiddle faddle. What brought you here?

Dicky

"Shank's mare." The other menas of conveyance in this "Benighted burgh" are limited.

Pelham

And why are you here?

Dicky

I am here, because I'm here, because I'm here.

Pelham

Weren't you told I was not at home.

Dicky

Oh yes, but I know your servant was lying, so I paid no attention to him. There's a big wind outside and I just "blew in."

Pelham

My servant? (Enters L.U.E. Mary follows him)

Dicky

Yes, that fellow who looks as if he played pool for a living and by the way, that reminds me, Mr. Haynes, you certainly had your assurance with you last night in inviting me to a gentleman's card game, and then ring in your coach man, footman, valet or what ever hireling he may happen to be, to play against us. I assure you, my friend Screwby will be very much humiliated when he hears of it. He will be here presently. I shall take pleasure in informing him of the slight put on his representative. I shall rejoice in the tears of anguish that will roll down his aged cheek.

Middleton

If you are speaking of me as a servant let me tell you sir, I serve nobody.

Dicky

Nobody? Do you speak of my old friend Haynes as nobody? Let me tell you fellow, Mr. Haynes is somebody.

Pelham

Middleton only serves the devil.

Dicky

The devil, well begging the ladies' pardon, that is probably why he's a hell of a servant.

Pelham

Ahem! These young ladies are my daughters, Mr. Bird, Miss Florance and Miss Mary. (Bus. Dicky grabs Florence's hand and shakes it effusively)

Dicky

Miss Mary, I am charmed. Mary was my mother's name. Grand old name, Mary! (Then he suddenly shifts hands holding on to Florence's right hand with his L. pulls her over while he shakes Mary's hand) And this is Florence! I had an aunt named Florence. Isn't it strange?

Mary

Yes, but I'm not Florence.

Florence

And I am not Mary. You've got us mixed, Mr. Bird. I'm Florence, and she, my sister is Mary.

Dick

(Still clinging to them) Ah, I see. (Looks from one to the other) Oh, what an embarrassment of rides! How happy could I be with either. Were the other dear charmer away. After all "what's in a name." That which we call a rose by any other name would

smell as sweet.

Mary

(Releasing herself gently, Dicky reaching after her, vainly and dragging Florence with him)

Mary

(After bus) Mr. Bird!

Dicky

Eh? Oh, I don't mind if you call me "Dicky."

Mary

You were speaking of "rose." Did you know you are boarding with my aunt Miss Summers?

Dicky

What? Miss Summers your aunt?

Mary

Yes, Aunty Rosy. You see Rose is her first name.

Dicky

"Rose" her first name, it ought to be her last.

Mary

I don't understand.

Dicky

Why the last "Rose of Summer." Don't you see? Eh? (Laughs) Ha! Ha! Ha! Lit le one of my own. I roll them off just like that.

Mary

Aunt Rosy thinks a good deal of you.

Dicky

(Groans) Ah! Oh! And she makes me think a great deal about her. (Middleton disgusted, strolls up back) I'm glad to know that she is called "Rose." I'll name my new punching bags after her. (Picks up bag)

Middleton

(Laughs) Ha! Ha! Ha!

Dicky

Menial Varlet! Cat those giggles! Yes Rose, you "little faded flower" everytime I slam this bag, I'll think of you and vice versa. Everytime I think of you, I'll slam the bag! (Poses bag in L. hand, hits it straight punch with R. off towards L.U.E. where Middleton stands. Middleton fore-sees Dicky's intention, falls flat dodging the bag. It strikes Screwby who has entered L.U.E. standing pompously in door way)

Screwby

Who did that? who did it, I say?

Dicky

(Pointing to Middleton) There stands the culprit! There! That "inflated bag# was going in his direction and to have his own miserable skin, he stooped. The coward craven ducked, and caused this indignity to be put upon you.

Middleton

See here! (Picking up punching bag) Don't you dare try to mix me up with this bag of wind! (Starts to throw it away, bangs Screwby in stomach)

Screwby

Ouch! (Doubling up)

Dicky

And don't you call my respected employer a "bag of wind."

Pelham

Gentlemen! Gentlemen! (As Screwby starts after Middleton with umbrella) Mr. Middleton, do me th favor to kindlu withdraw. I have some business to talk over with Mr. Screwby.

Middleton

Very well! Mr. Dicky Bird, I'll settle with you later.

Dicky

Nevertheless, "Desmond" I will still defy you, when we meet, it will be man to man.

Middleton

Oh, pooh!

Dicky

Pooh pooh yourself and a good many of them.

Mid dleton

Mary, I want a word with you.

Dicky

Beware of the "deadly touch" Mary - Beware! Beware! (Middlton draws Mary of L.U.E.) Mr. Screwby, you can't tell how hurt I am.

Screwby

Mr. Bird, all the hurt is on my side.

Dicky

Your side? Why I thought your solar plexus was affected. No soreness there? Eh? Eh? (Pokes Screwby in ribs)

Screwby

No, but there will be if you keep on poking me that way.

Dicky

And then I fancied you got it the first time. "Slam" in the nose. Are you sure your nose is not broken or at least "out of jount", if it is, I'll pull it into place. (Grabs Screwby by nose, pulls him around stage)

Screwby

(Struggling) Damn it, let go.' Let go! (Throws Dicky off)

Dicky

There's gratitude for you and I only want to fix his nose.

Screwby

My nose will not be the only one that needs fixing if you don't let me alone.

Dicky

Let you alone? (With dignity) Do you mean to say, that I am introduing Mr. Screwby? Do you want me to go away?

Screwby

I didn't say that.

Dicky

Well that is all I want to know. You may have forgotten that I am here at your particular request. The part you have assigned to me is particularly repugnant. I have no wish to "butt" into Mr. Haynes' private affairs and act as a spy on him.

Haynes

(Interested) A spy oh me?

Dicky

I can call it nothing else. He cannot deny that he asked me to present at this interview and see that you don't "put anything over on him". I am to take notes of everything you say. Mr. Haynes, for I can tell you my employer here regards you as a slippery customer. I on the other hand consider you as "sticky"in fact, "gluey."

Haynes

Sticky! Gluey!

Dicky

Yes, for example, let me imagine my boss loaned you a thousand dollars this afternoon.

Screwby

We won't imagine any such thing.

Dicky

You are not in this.

Screwby

I don't know why not. It's my money you're talking about.

Dicky

(Ignoring him) If Haynes here got his fingers on a thousand dollars of your money, would he ever slip it back? No, it would "stick". You would have to pry it off him with a "jimmy."

Pelham

Sir, you are becoming offensive.

Screwby

I wish you ~~xx~~ would leave Mr. Haynes and myself to transact our business in peace. (Loud rumble of thunder heard and flushes of lightning seesn through window C.)

Dicky

We're going to have a dandy storm. Come on Flossy, let's go out on the veranda dnt ake it in. I so love to "wathh" the thunder and "listen" to the lightning.

Florence

You mean "vice versa" don't you?

Dicky

I never had a good look at vice versa . Come.

Florence

I don't know whether I ought to, you said my father was "sticky" that he reminded you of "glue."

Dicky

Flossy, don't mind that. I really think the old man cements. (Puts arm around her, thy exuent C. through window)

Pelham

I am surprised that you have such a "fresh" individual in your employ, Screwby.

Screwby

I employ whom I please, Haynes. I don't want nobody to tell me how to run my business. That Dicky Bird don't cost me nothing. He has rich folks who make up the salary he's supposed to get and I generally contrives to "cop" out something for myself.

Pelham

I am surprised that you should try to "cop" out for yourself.

Screwby

Well you see, Dicky was to college and got into scrap after scrap and at last had to leave and his folks sent him to me, as - a - a

Pelham

Punishment, no doubt.

Screwby

Punish - punish nothing. But come down to tacks. You sent for me.

Pelham

Yes, you have that chain and locket I ordered for Florence's birthday.

Screwby

You bet I have, and I'm going to hang on to them until I get the money back you jiggered me into paying on them, and I want to tell you Haynes, I've stood your banker for the last time. You've jiggered me enough, you've the worst "jigger" I ever knowned.

Pelham

Now my dear Screwby.

Screwby

Don't "dear" me. It won't do you a bit of good. I've entered foreclosure proceedings on this here property and don't you think you can "slave" me again. Presents for Florence, eh? You'd better go get her a job in a laundry, instead of encouraging her in sinful extravagance.

Pelham

Silence you idiot!

Screwby

I won't do no such thing. Why there must be a pound of gold in that jim crack adfair, outside of the "dimings# in the locket. Why you ought to be put in a "sahitary a -roarium."

Pelham

Hold your tongue, you mucker! And give up that chain and locket!

Screwby

They're to "hum" and I never give up without the price.

Pelham

Go after them, I have the money.

Screwby

I was raised in Kansas City --

Pelham

Oh, you want to see it. Well there you worm! See! See! (Produces roll of "yellow backs." Look at your god! Kneel down and worship, you miserable, contemptible, knavist, degraded and infamous tight wad!

Screwby

Don't you call me amny more of them names of I'll get mad. You've been high and mighty long enough. You've put on airs with me long enough and by heck - I'm going to stop it. You've always despised me, but I've got the bit in your mouth now. You've blinded and saddled -I'm on top, the reins in one fist, a stout whip in the other and if I want to , I'll ride you to Hell and you can't help yourself. (Re-enter Dicky and Florence from C. window)

Pelham

You insolent niggardly miser! How dare you?

Screwby

What's that? who are you calling a nigger? Look out for yourself. (Throws off coat) This is where I fight. I'm Screwby the scrapper! Come on! (Squaring off) Come in! (Pelham rushes at him, Screwby runs away, gets behind table) Hold up! Hold up! I ain't quite ready yet. (Pelham chases him around table)

Dicky

Gentleman this is atrocious. This is no way for you to settle an argument.

Screwby

Dicky, you're right. Let's talk is over.

Dicky

Gentlemen should fight with gentlemen's weapson, but alas, the days of duelling are past. The sword has been supplanted. Now with the permission of you both, I will act as referee. I have here a box of rat poison. (Produces box) Here are two spoons. (Picks them from table) You each take a spponful of this paste, and the one who dies first, loses all bets.

Screwby

Let him take his spoonful first.

Pelham

Such a suggestion is ridiculous.

Screwby

I ain't no rat.

Dicky

Then there's nothing left but the gloves. You shall fitht with these. (Takes gloves from package)

Pelham

No, I'll handle this viper without gloves! (Makes another rush at Screwby. Dik hold him)

Screwby

(Running away) Hold that lunatic! Hold him Dicky until I make my escape. I've just decided that I won't fight him until he gets a reputation and I can see there's some money in it. Dicky if you love me, hit him in the "noddle" and I'll raise your salary. (Dicky and Pelham struggle. Pelham endeavoring to get at Screwby)

Florence

Oh papa! Papa! Mr. Screwby, part them, won't you? Please! Please!

Screwby

I never meddle with what don't concern me. Besides, my father was a clergy man and this ain't no place for a minister's son. (Exits L.U.E.)

Dicky

Calm yourself, Mr. Haynes. "Screwby the scrapper" has escaped and you can never catch him.

Pelham

Will you do something for me, young man?

Dicky

Anything in the world except to lend you money or mind my own business. I can't do either.

Pelham

Go in pursuit of that insect!

Dick

What insect?

Pelham

That loathesome scrawling thing, called "Screwby."

Dicky

Oh yes, he's "bugs" all right.

Pelham

Ask him for that "jewel box" of mine he holds. Bring it to me with the receipted bill and I will pay you the amount.

Dicky

In real money?

Pelham

Of course, no other passes through my hands.

Dicky

I'm not thinking of your hands, but your mind. You know you smoke a good deal and --

Pekham

Oh hurry! Hurry!

Dicky

Don't ask me to hurry, I've got a "hook worm." Say, I'll leave my property here till I come back "Flosie!" You can play with these while I'm gone. (Tosses gloves to her) Practice on his jiglets, here.

Florence

(Stamps her foot at him) Mr. Dirk, you're real rude.

Dicky

That's what they all say.

Florence

All what?

Dicky

All the little pug nosed "peacherinas" before they learn to love me. (About to go)

Florence

Don't forget to take your rat poison! (Presents box)

Dicky

How often am I to take it?

Florence

You ought to know you wanted papa to take it/

Dicky

Dearest Flossie, this isn't poison, this is shoe polish, I thought it might brighten up your daddy's liver. He could get a shine inside so to speak.

Pelham

I have all the shine, I want, young man.

Dicky

Yes, I know you're all shine, but --

Pelham

(Impatiently) Will you go!

Dicky

Of course. (Noise of gain) It's raining at last. (Middleton enters with umbrella)

Dicky

(Grabs it) Here, give me that.

Middleton

Sir!

Dicky

Varlet! Don't talk back, I need this. (Throws off Middleton) Don't worry, Mr. Haynes, I'll get that jewel box out of Screwby if I have to hypnotize him

Pleham

Do so and I'll pay the five five hundred on your return.

Dicky

If you don't,, I'll have to chloroform you - by - by "sugar lips." Oh you "Flossie!" (Exits L.U.E. Pelham follows)

Middleton

Sugar lips! Florence what does this familiarity mean ? Why does he call you sugar lips?

Florence

Because, possibly he considers my lips are very, very sweet. I may have given him a strong impression that they are.

Muddleton

You had no right.

Florence

(Flaring up) Don't you talk of right, you mean, deceitful, horrible, ugly wretch! I hate you! There! (Flounches off door R.3.E. Slams door in Middleton's face. Thunder)

Middleton

I wonder what the devil's been going on here and five hundred dollars. That old fox Haynes has been under cover all the time. (Exits slowly up stairs R U E. Pause. Mary in long cloak appears at window C. which is lighted up by lightning flash, as she enters)

Mary

Come in Jack, come in here. There's no one about. I saw father go towards the stable, we can have a few minuts here undisturbed.

John

(Enters at window, closes window, he has long top coat, which he doffs with hat, on seeing Mary, shake the rain d ops off her cloa, she turns to him. He extends his arms she nestles in them)

Mary

Jack, my poor, dear Jack!

John

And you still have faith in me, Mary?

Mary

I still have faith Jack? Why I'd believe in you even if the world were against you. We must be patient, my dearest. Time and He who rules above will set all right.

Jogn

I have felt like an outcast since I came back to this, my boyhood's home. I never realized before how I was thought of among men. I was defiant during my trial out West. I had many ~~systems~~ sympathizers. I was conscious of my own innocence and never flinched an instant. I took my acquittal as a matter of right of justice.

Mary

And so it was, Jack.

John

When I journeyed through Denver, there were ten thousand people at the station to greet me. I was cheered they bore me on their shoulders. I was welcomed, I was applauded. The crowd seemed frenzied over "their hero" as they styled me. I didn't know what it was then. It was the party feeling running wild. They didn't applaud me because I was really innocent, mary believed I had inspired the crime for which I had been tried, and that clever lawyers had saved me. They only rejoiced because the prosecution had failed. Tjey hated the man who was assassinated with a deadly hatred. Then as I came further and furhter from the heat of the battle, the bitter conflict which had almost rent a state. My eyes began to open. I was recognized at time and gaped at with curosity. They had heard vaguely of the trial, and they stared at me as if I were a strange wild animal. Oh I came still further,

and I found I as an object of suspicion and here inmy home, where I thought I had nothing but friend , people flee my approach as they would a pestilence. ..others pick up their children as I come along and rush into their houses with them. In their eyes, I am the foul fiend himself. But you, Mary, you still trust in me. God bless you for that, my darling. God bless you, God bless you. (Breaks down, clasps Mary to his heart)

Mary

Courage, Jack,have courage.

John

I'll try, my angel , I'll try.

Mary

There is some place that we are not known, we will go there, John. And face up a new existence. ,You are strong and I will work and help you. We will forget the past and face up our new future, which we will warm with our hearts,until it glows into promise.

John

We? We? You are not going to forsake me then?

Mary

Forsake you, why, how could I?

John

Then it isn't true about that, that other fellow?

Mary

There isn't any other fellow, Jack.

John

And the rumors I heard about the man who is stopping he e with your fath r. The man I saw with you on the lawn this evening.

Mary

Mr. Middleton?

John

I don't know what his infernal name is --

Mary

Any rumors you ever heard connecting me with him are false. Jack, Mr. Middleton has paid some attentions to Florence. (Pelham re-enters L.U.E. starts on seeing John, stands listening) But Jack for me, you have always been the only one, are the only one,, and will be the only one until eternity.

John

Mary, my Mary, your words lift me out of the depts into paradise itself.

Pelham

(Sarcastically) I am sorry to disturb your dreams, Hayward, but the sooner you get out of my house,, the better.

Mary

Father!

Pelham

You know I don't want this criminal here, and what's more I won't have him. Let him get out and stay out and more, I forbid you ever exchanging a word with him again.

Mary

Don't forbid me that, father!

Pelham

Why not?

Mary

Because if you do, for the first time in my life I shall be compelled to disobey you.

Pelham

If you notice him in any way and mind, I'll keep a watch on you, I'll turn you out of doors also.

Mary

Your house is your own. You can do as you choose, but my right to meet the man I love is my own, and I will not give it up.

Pelham

So far this miserable, cowardly murderer, this vagabond scorned by all man kind, this skulking cur who probably is making use of your infatuation to prowl round my home to see what he can steal.

John

Silence! If you utter another aldnder against me, in her presence I'll torottle you with my own hands.

Pelham

Aha! Threats, eh? Take care! Young man! Take care! You're not among your Colorado ruffians now. You'll find out that justice here is not the miserable travesty your scoundrelly lawyers made of it in Idaho.

John

(Exasperated) You willhave it, eh?

Mary

(Clinging to John, as he is about to rush oh Pelham who grabs "andiron" in posture of defense) John! John! nor my sake, remember he is my father. Go now and I'll meet you later. (Middleton re-enters, stands athack)

John

I respect your presence, Mary, but Pelham Haynes! Don't rely on your relationship to Mary too far. Sometimes we'll meet where we'll not be interrupted and I'll make you on your knees confess that every word you have uttered against my character is a malicious lie. You know the truth and you shall speak the truth by God! You shall , and don't you forget that, Mr. Pelham Hay es! (Grabs up his coat and hat exits C. Lightning and thunder)

Pelham

You meant what you said about meeting this man?

Mary

(Firmly) Yes, I meant what I said.

Pelham

Then leave this house and never enter it again.

Mary

Never, unless you ask me to come to you.

Pelham

I might have known how you would turn out, you ungrateful cat! You are like your mother before you.

Mary

Don't speak ill of my mother, I forbid it!

Pelham

(Sneering) You? you forbid?

Mary

Yes, I! Her memory is the only thing in my past life, I cherish. I can't look back upon my slighted childhood with any joy and since I've grown to womenhood I have been more and more neglected. Everything has been lavished on Florence and you have made of me your other child a drudge in your house. I have done my duties uncompalainingly, yes, bravely, for I have never known an affectionate word from you in all my recollection.

Pelham

Oh, you remind me too much of your mother, she by her shameful act --

Mary

Not another word, you shant defame her memory. You by your treatment have already forfeited what love I might have borne for you, and now your cruel slander of my mother kills the last atom of respect, you unworthy father! Farewell, I never want to look upon your face again.

Pelham

Ditto! But here , you can't go altogether unprovided. Heres some money, which --

Mary

Keep it! Keep it!Keep it'.

Pelham

(Lays the roll of bills on the table) I'll leave it here in case you should change your mind. (Turns down to fireplace)

Mary

Not a penny! Not a penny& I'll face starvation first. Exits R.U.E. up steps at back)

Pelham

(Lights cigar by mantle, sits in easy chair L. thinks for a moment) Humph! Rather awkward Mary leaving just now. I'll have to hire a servant girl. (Dicky enters L.U.E.)

Middleton

(Bus/ Comes quietly down to table while Pelham has above bus. and speech, and picks up the money from table, pockets it, Dicky sees the theft)

Dicky turns

Peek a boo! (Middleton starts, Pelham ~~xxxxx~~)

Pelham

Oh, Mr. Bird, have you come back?

Dicky

Yes, I'm of the kind who always come back.

Pelham

And you brought the jewel box?

Dicky

I certainly did. Here it is. (Hands jewel case)

Pelham

Dear Florence, it's her birthday to-morrow and this is the only present I have for her. (Takes chair (heavy) and locjet from case)

Dicky

(Looking & chain) And that's some present, you can bet your -- Oh, by the way, Screwby is waiting in his buggy outside for his coin.

Pelham

(Feeling in pocket) Oh yes - I - I forgot, I gave that money to Mary.

Dicky

Eh?

Pelham

But she wouldn't take it.

Dicky

Oh!

Pelham

I laid it on the table here. (Discovers the bills not there) Gone. Why, what does this mean?

Dicky

(Meaningly pointing to Middleton) Peek a boo!

Middleton

what the devil do you meab by your "peek a boo."

Dicky

Just the song of the Dicky Bird! Were the bills of large denomination?

Pelham

They were all "fifties" and all marked by Screwby, the last money he paid me. I kept them in spite of all temptation for Florence's present.

Dicky

All marked, eh? "Beeky Pooh." Ask this man (Pointing to Middleton) to show up all the money in his pocket for examination.

Middleton

What do you mean?

Dicky

I mean that I saw you pick up the bills from the table.

Middleton

You're a damned liar! (Bus. Dicky knocks him down)

Dicky

Get upt! (Kicks him) Get up! I want to knock you down again.

Pelham

Gentlemen! Gentlemen!

Dicky

(Boots Middleton again) Don't you dare to answer, he doesn't mean you.

Pelham

Mr. Bird I beg of you, don't carry this any further. Call Mr. Screwby in. I have enough in bank to to satisfy the debt for this. (Pointing to jewel box) I'll write him a checque.

Dicky

I'll call him in that he may identify hismark on the bills, that skunk has in his pocket. He's called me a liar, I'm going to prove him a thief. (Exits L.U.E.)

Pelham

Now Middleton!

Middleton

Not a word! I'm going to fix myself for that fellow. He won't slip one over me again. (Noise of rain, wind etc. Distant rumble of thunder. The windo at back is blown open. Lights on stage all out)

Pelham

(At mantle) Confound it, there goes the lamp. Have you a match? I can't find one. Oh, well never mind there are some up stairs. I'll get them and close those upper windows at the same time. (As the lightning flashes, Pelham is seen, grasping his way to R.U.E. exits up stairs. Mary enters R.3.E. with syit case gropes her way to window. Lightning reveals Middleton in window)

Middleton

So you are really going, Mary? I will accompany you.

Mary

I don't wat your company, sir. Keep away from me, keep away from me. (Exits window C.)

Middleton

Oh, but I insist! (Exits after Mary. Pause)

Screwby

(Outside) You had no business to leave it unless he gave you the money. (Enters with Dicky L .U.E. falls over chair at back) Damn it all! He's put out all the lights, so as I'd fall over some thing and break my leg. Give me a match.

Dicky

I haven't any.

Screwby

Well, we must have some light. Get the lantern from the buggy. This is all a scheme of that scoundrel Haynes. Well, he'll pay me my money or give me back the jewel box, or I'll have his heart's blood. (Ficky exits L.U.E. Screwby tries to grope his way back to L.U.E. falls over chair again.) Ouch! That's twice I done that! (Exits L.U.E. Pause. Pelham enters down stairs upper R. He lights matches, which blow out almost immediately.)

Pelham

Middleton! Middleton! Are you there? Gone, the jewel box! (Over to mantle piece) Ah, it is here. Florence must not be disappointed. (Terrific crash of thunder, and forked lightning aplsy all over room. The all lights out, utter blackness. Pause, enter Dicky carrying lantern)

Dicky

Screwby. (Lights half up)

Dicky

(Puts lantern on table R.) You've only got to wait for him, that's all.

Screwby

(Comes down L.) Ah! Look there! (Points to Pelham who lies face downward by fireplace, the "andiron" overturned. The jewel box open and empty, clenched in his right hand)

Dicky

My God, it is he. (Kneels beside him(

Screwby

Dead!

Dicky

Murdered! See that awful wound, his head's crushed in.

Screwby

Who - who - who has done this? See, the jewel box empty.

Dicky

Yes, the jewels gone. He was murdered for them. (John and Middleton struggling together. Enter C. window Mary following and endeavoring to calm John)

John

Down on your knees, I say and beg her pardon, or I'll wring your infernal neck! (Forces Middleton to knees, Florence enters R.3.E)

Dicky

Stop this untimely brawling, you are in the presence of death.

Omnes

Death!

Dicky

Mr. Haynes has been murdered.

Omnes

Murdered!

Florence

Dead! (Rushes over to body. Kneels) speak to me,, papa - speak, speak! (Hysterically sobbing. Mary by her side weeping and at the same time trying to soothe Florence)

Middleton

Murder! Why, what motive could there be for murder?

Dicky

Robbery, Mr. Middleton, robbery! The same motive which inspired you to-night to steal those fifty dollar bills from that table. The jewels are gone and Edward Middleton, I charge you with the crime.

Middleton

It is false, it is.

Dicky

Search that man. (John seizes Middleton, holds him, while Screwby goes through him, pulls out bills from inside pocket)

Screwby

There ain't no chain, no locket, but here's some money.

Dicky

Do you recognize those bills, Mr. Screwby?

Screwby

(Examining them by lantern) By gravy, I do. There is the very bills I paid Haynes on our last deal. My mark is on them.

Middleton

But I am not guilty of Haynes' murder. I swear I am innocent.

Dicky

The finger of suspicion points directly to you. If you are innocent I hope you will prove it, but if you're guilty, I pray to God, Edward Middleton, I'll live to see you hanged for this most cowardly crime.

PICTURE & CURTAIN

Dicky

John

Mary

Middleton

Florence.

Screwby

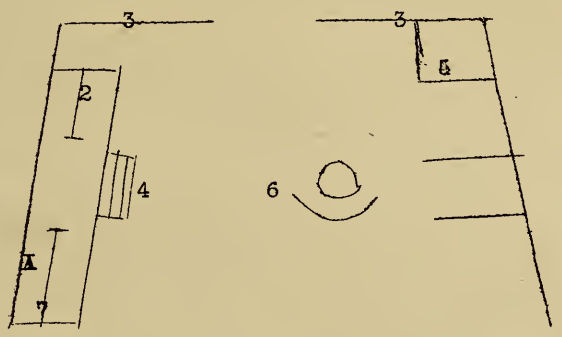
Haynes.

---oooOOOOOOOooo---

Act Second.

Scene:- The garden and grounds of the Haynes Manions.
Two days later.

Landscape Drop.



E X P L A N A T I O N.

1- Handsome house R. of stage door as marked window, not practical in return facing audience) (2) Verandas. (3) Low stone wall with gate way L of C. (4) Steps leading down D. (5) Brick wall of barn, with return leading off L. upper L of stage (6) Large set tree L of C seat surrounding same. (7) Bench below window. Landscape drop for back, Wood wings.

At Rise:- Dicky and Screwby discovered on bench surrounding tree. Dicky is smoking pipe. Jerry Blossom enters from house R stands in door-way, he is madeup in long coat, cap and pipe ala Sherlock Holmes.)

Blossom

(Coughs) Ahem! The jury has just went out.

Dicky

(Looks up at him) Oh! They "has" - has they?

Blossom

Yep! The Coroner told them to go.

Dicky

Then I suppose that's why they "goed".

Blossom

"Goed"?

Dicky

Yes, "Blew" "Absconded" "Mizzled" Made their exit "Got the Hook"

Blossom

See here, young fellow. You don't want to make no fund of "a inquest" Inquests and post mortems, is serious things.

Dicky

How do you know? Have you ever had them?

Blossom

No, I haint.

Dicky

Why "haint" you?

Blossom

Cause I haint died yet.

Dicky

Why haven't you died? Perhaps you are dead, and don't know it.

Blossom

Funny, ain't you? And your name is Bird. You're a fresh bird. If I was to sprinkle a little salt on your tail, you wouldn't be so fresh. Eh? Did you heat that Si? (Laughs) Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho! (Slaps Screw. vigorously on the back.)

Screwby

Ouch! (wncing) Stop that.

Blossom

Did you hear the joke I made about him being "salt", I mean "fresh"? Ha, ha, Why don't you laugh?

Screwby

I don't feel like laughing, go 'way. Go 'way. Ugh. My shoulder. (Groaning)

Dicky

Bemighted, blithering, Barbarian. Beat it.

Screwby

But he don't want me to beat it.

Dicky

Oh! (Groans) Governor, what do you call this "piece of cheese?

Screwby

I'm ashamed to tell you what I call him. He calls himself "Blossom"

Dicky

Blossom? "Pansy" or Gin? It ought to be "Gin" judging by his nose.

Blossom

I'm Jerry Blossom.

Dicky

Well, if you're "Jerry" why don't you prove you're Jerry and not "butt in" where you're not wanted.

Blossom

Not wanted, eh? Well, young fellow, I'm a policeman and some day you may find that I'm not around when I am wanted.

Dicky

I never saw a policeman of your kind who was, now don't interrupt anymore. We're busy. (to Screwby) Governor what are you saying?

Screwby

Why the Jury will never hold that Middleton chap for Haynes murder.

Dicky

How could they in the face of the alibi Mary established for him, she swore that she heard her father going up-stairs as she was leaving the house, when Middleton insisted on accompanying her.

Screwby

But you saw him take the money which was intended for me from the table.

Dicky

I certainly did, and from that circumstance, I framed my theory of his guilt that he and Mr. Haynes quarreled and he struck the old man down, and then stole the Jewelry, but it was not found on him.

Screwby

(Groans) It wasn't found no where. It's gone and the five hundred dollars I'll never get that. (Whispers) I'm the one who's getting the worst of this deal.

Dicky

How about Haynes who lost his life, brutally murdered?

Screwby

Well, he don't need money where he's gone. If he had all the money in the world, he couldn't buy a palm leaf fan or a pitcher of ice-water.

Dicky

How about his two girls left fatherless. What is your five hundred dollars loss compared with, their great grief.

Screwby

I wish Dicky you wouldn't speak of so much money so carelessly, but try and think of some scheme, how I can get "them fifties" out of Middleton. You know they're honestly mine. He ought to be satisfied with the chain and locket if he has them soaked away somewhere.

Dicky

I'm not altogether sure that he has them soaked away anywhere.

Screwby

Well, if he isn't the guilty one, who is?

Dicky

That is the question.

Blossom

If I was on that jury, I know who I'd wote to hold.

Dicky

What, you here again? I thought we'd lost you.

Blossom

You "kaint" lost me.

Screwby

(Eagerly) Go on, Blossom. What were you saying? Who would you vote to hold?

Blossom

Why, "them" two daughters of "his's."

Dicky

"Them" two daughters of "whosen"?

Blossom

Of "his'n", Haynes of course. Every bit of evidence "pints" to one of them, so it's well to suspect the one who seems innocent. That's the way it allus turns out in the "old sleuth" series. (Dicky laughs) Oh, you needn't giggle, I hain't the only one who thinks as I do, there are others.

Dicky

You ought to all get together and form the "Bonehead" club.

Blossom

I ahin't a been a readin' Detective Stories twenty years for nothin'! I know all about the murder mysteries, from the Chicago sassidge maker who turned his "fat wife" into links and sold her at reduced rates, to the Gunness case in "Ingiznny" Then there was "them" Borden Sisters in New Endland, who were acquitted for murderin' both their "parents"!

Dicky

Oh, come on, let's get away from the ravings of this idiot

Screwby

No, no, there may be something in what he says after all. (Enter Rose Summers from house, dress extravagantly, carrying umbrella.)

Blossom

Well, I should say there be somethin' of course, I ain't a been to college and got kicked out like some people, but I'm got human intelligence. I know all that's worth knowing on this ere spear. Nobody can learn me nothin', and I puffectly disgust them as they tries to, I disgust them. I say I disgust them. (Belligerently to Dicky.)

Dicky

I don't doubt it.

Blossom

Then shet your mouth, and listen to wisdom. I say that, Mary Haynes and her sister orter to be put through the thrd degree and I'd like to have the job of doing it.

Rose

(coming down) Oh you would, eh? You would? You freckle faced, fossilized frog, you just try it on me first, I'll show you where you get off with your "third degree."

Blossom

Miss Rosy-

Rose

Don't you dare to "rosy me" you cross eyed crocodile. This is your petty revenge is it? Because I won't marry you, and thet you lead a life of idle dissipation and debanchery, a squirtin' of tobacco juice around the grocery store all on my money. You mearly, malicious monster, you, you are tryin' to east slurs and suspicions on my dead sister's child. But come on, try your degrees on me first, you debilitated devil. Try them on me I defy you.

Dicky

That's right Rose. (Applauding) That's right, give it to him.

Blossom

Rose, if I had knowed you'd been here, I wouldn't have spoken as I did.

Rose

If ever you come around to my kitchen again, a hankerin' for tea and a talkin' of the lovelight a shinin' in my beautiful eyes, I'll scald you, you - you hypocritical homely hyena! (Hysterically starts to beat him with umbrella, Blossom shelters himself as best he can behind Screwby who gets several of the blows intended for Blossom) (Blossom exits hurriedly into house R)

Screwby

Woman. Woman. Be careful, what are you about?

Rose

Who are you calling a woman, you are as bad as he is.

Screwby

(Dodging) Dicky, help me, won't you.

Dicky

No, couldn't think of such a thing. You have brought it all on yourself by associating with that "blighted Blossom" You had better ask her pardon.

Screwby

(Kneels) Oh Rose! Sweet Rose! See me on your, your knees with my feet, I mean, on your feet with my knees, no say you know what I mean. Oh Rose, Sweet flower of Love.

Rose

Rats. Cut all that stuff out.

Screwby

You'll someday know what I've got in prospect for you.

Rose

Yes, and you won't wait long to know what I have in prospect for you. (Flourishes umbrella.)

Screwby

I am going to "bid in" this property. Beloved beautiful Rose, Share it with me, live here with me.

Rose

What?

Screwby

(Shrinks) As my wife, of course, that's what I meant.

Rose

Do you suppose I thought you meant anything else. You super-animated shark.

Screwby

Don't approach me with my years, Rose. My hart is still young. It is because of my years that I choose you. I am not only looking for a wife, but a daughter.

Rose

Dicky what do you think of that?

Dicky

I am very inexperienced, but a daughter. I don't think Mr. Screwby has the right to dictate to the sex of the offspring, if you make up your mind to accept him.

Screwby

(Indignantly) Mr. Bird.

Rose

Oh Dicky.

Dicky

Oh Button-hooks.

Blossom

(at door) The members of the Jury has come out again, for further instructions, and "Birdy" you are wanted.

Dicky

(starts) Are you speaking to me? If you are, I want to give you a tip.

Blossom

What is it?

Dicky

The lasy individual who took liberties with my name, I "pecked in the eye" You I think, I'll poke in the nose. (Knocks Makes rush for Blossom)

Blossom

(exits into house, crying) Help! Help! (Dicky pursues him off)

Rose

(Looks at Screwby languishingly) Do you know, I think Dicky is real peevish. He's jealous of you proposing to me.

Screwby

Jealous, why?

Rose

He has ideas of marrying me, himself.

Screwby

Great scott! What! Has that child proposed to you.

Rose

Not yet, but he has looked "things" "Mutterable things" I have lately commenced to think that Dicky is not exactly "a child" although very unsophisticated, but to come down to "tacks" si, about your own proposal, when would you like to wed your little Rose?

Screwby

Well, Miss Summers, It's going to be a hard winter, and Summers with me is always tough. Money is scarce and I'd like to gather in all that's coming to me before I take any more chances. Matrimony is the biggest sort of a chance, but if you arrange a little matter for me, we could possibly come to an understanding.

Rose

Don't beat the devil around the stump, but come down to facts.

Screwby

Mary Haynes thinks a good deal of you, doesn't she?

Rose

Why shouldn't she? Wasn't her mother my sister, Isn't she coming to live with me, although she wouldn't come until I consented to take Florence also. But what has Mary got to do with you and me getting married?

Screwby

Well from the evidence today, I have pretty well settled in my mind that is Mary didn't slam her father in the coco with that "andiron", she may know who did.

Rose

What?

Screwby

And she took that gold chain and locket, because she didn't want Florence to get them, now I never was paid for those gin-cracks and I paid out five hundred dollars of my good money for them. Now you go to her and tell her of the immense prospects you have with me, and she may give them up.

(Nothing Omitted.)

Rose

Can I believe my ears?

Screwby

You can assure her my word is my bond, and I won't tell anybody. We three will keep the secret to ourselves it will be in the family, so to speak if I can bring myself to marry you. Why, what's the matter. What are you looking for? (as Rose walks right and L apparently searching for something/

Rose

For an axe?

Screwby

Why an axe?

Rose

Just stay around and find out. The Post mortem on Pelham Haynes won't be the only one to-day?

Florence.

(enters she is dressed in black.) Aunt Rose. Aunt Rose. Aunt Rose Come quickly to mary she has fainted. (Middleton enters from house)

Rose

Fainted. (Goes to door)

Screwby

Think over what I said, Rose?

Rose

And you think over what I say? If you fool around me anymore we will hold another inquest in this village, or my name isn't Rose Summers. (Middleton drops down right below door. Raises his hat ironically to Rose and then to Florence)

Rose

(Tunrs up nose.) Florenec Haynes if you notice that " Scum" never speak to me again. (Rose and Florence exuent. Florence urging Rose to hurry)

Middle

Humph! It appears Mr Screwby we are both of us in bad, there. (Pointing to door where Rose has made her exit.

Screwby

Yes, It seems I'm all in. I am also all out. What are you doing away from the inquest. Aren't you in custody?

Middle

Only nominally. There's a delay in there and I felt I needed a smoke and--(Feeling for cigarette case crosses L)

Screwby

A smoke. That reminds me. (takes a cigar from vest pocket ana match box, exmaines cigar about to bite off end Middleton takes it away from him)

Middleton.

Thanks, I don't care if I do. A cigar will go better now than a cigarette.

Screwby

)protesting.) But, I didn't intend that cigar for you.

Middleton.

This one will do. Just as well as another. Don't apologize. Let me have a match please. (takes matchbox from Screwby lighst cigar puts match box in pocket abstractedly)

Screwby

(sits on seat by the tree staring at Middleton. Middleton sits along side of him, Screwby hastily shifts his watch from left to right hand vest pocket)

Middleton.

(Puffs cigar.) This whole affair is an awful joke, isn't it?

Screwby

I'm glad you find it so, I don't.

Middleton

The idea of that young whelp, Dicky Bird charging me with robbery and murder.

Screwby

Well, I don't know about the murder. But the robbery part -- (Buttons coat)

Middleton

Do you suppose I would stoop to steal such a pitiful sum as five hundred dollars?

Screwby

I wish you wouldn't speak of my loss so contemptuously.

Middleton

Your loss?

Screwby

Why yes, that money was intended by Haynes for me.

Middleton

Then why didn't he give it to you? Instead of losing it to me the night before at poker.

Screwby

Poker?

Middleton

Yes, I won it.

Screwby

You won it all right, that's certain, but Dicky Bird -- says--

Middleton

Has it never occured to you, that Dicky may be lying?

Screwby

Lying? Oh say, kind sir, let's come to an understanding, give up the chain and locket and I won't betray you. I swear it on my honor as a deacon of the old brick church.

Middleton

Mr. Screwby I have never seen that chain and locket, I swear that on my honor as an ex-member of the legislature. Why don't you try to get it out of Dicky? Dicky had it last.

Screwby

That's so, he did have it last. I never thought of that.

Middleton

I wonder when that jury will make up their mind?

Screwby

What? Are they out again?

Middleton

Yes. They retired just when I came out here.

Screwby

(Points to house corner) There's the room. (Has. bus. of sneaking over R. down below house, gets up on seat, tris to peer into window. Blossom enters from house is about to speak ot Middleton who checks him and points to Screwby. Blossom spies him gets spade from garden toold, gives Screwby a spank with it) Eh, what, don't do that again. I have a weak heart.

Blossom

Git down from that window! Git down!

Screwby

It's my window, or soon will be.

Blossom

I'll learn you what tryin' to "inl-flooence" a jury means. I'll have you before the coroner and have him sit on you. (Collars Screwby)

Screwby

(Struggling) Don't jerry. Say Jerry! I'll give you half a dollar to let me go.

Blossom

Half a dollar? That's bribery. Come along!

Middleton

Offer him more, make it an inducement.

Screwby

Seventy five cents.

Blossom

Nothin' doin'.

Screewby

Hold up! Hold up!

Middleton

Make it an inducement, I tell you.

Screwby

How do I know where bribery stops and an inducement begins?

Middleton

Give him a five spot.

Screwby

What, do you want to ruin me?

Blossom

A five spot or you for the coroner.

Screwby

Why stop at the coroner, why not right on to the undertaker?

Blossom

(Shakes him) Give up! Give up'. (Dicky enters from house. Screwby pulls out roll of bills, ahnds one to Blssom. Dicky interposes, grabs Bill)

Dicky

What's this?

Screewby

He calls it an inducement, he says "less" is bribery. I call it "my heart's blood."

Dicky

And why do you give it to him?

Screwby

So he won't drag me before the Coroner for peeking into the jury room.

Dicky

Aha! Hush money, eh? Blackmailing brigand! Rapacious rufian!'Tis well. Aha! We've caught you with the goods, eh? Come Mr. Screwby, we will go before the coroner, also the country attorney and that cringing catiff shall accompany. The crime of extorting money by means of threats is heavily punished. He will be a withered blossom when he emerges from the depths of the dismal, dark and doleful dungeon into which the law will cast him.

Blossom

But what about him? Screwby?

Screwby

Yes, what about me?

Dicky

Your sentence will be a shorter one, but you will have the satisfaction of purifying the police force of this town. That will comfort you while you are in prison.

Screwby

It won't comfort me a damned bit. Give me back my five and I'll call everything off.

Dicky

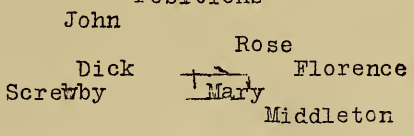
What? Compound a felony! No sir! You have shown that you are not to be trusted with money. I will keep the five as evidence. (Rose and Florence re-enter from house, supporting Mary between them. John follows stands back upper R.)

(Nothing omitted. See 1-B)

Rose

She wants some fresh air, then she'll be better. That room in there is packed like a sardine can. Blossom! I heard the coroner calling for you. (Business as she speaks, she and Florence lead Mary over to seat by tree, Blossom exits into house)

Positions



Rose

(Turning to John) So you are following her up, are you? Haven't you caused mischief enough with your presence here.

Mary

(Hysterically) Hush! Aunt Rose, you wrong John, you wrong him. You wrong him.

Middleton

I thank you, Miss Mary for telling the truth and establishing my innocence, though I fear you've got yourself into a pretty bad box.

John

What do you mean by that?

Middleton

I mean that the suspicion has shifted now, and the accusing finger of justice points directly to you. I overheard your threats to Haynes, Your past reputation for violence is against you and unless all signs are wrong, you will be held for this murder with Mary as your accomplice.

John

You dog, I'll (About to rush on him)

Dicky

(Holding him back) Hold up, Hold up! You can't help matters by mussing him up now, you'll only hurt your own cause.

Screwby

Dicky, you mind yourmown business. Let him hurt his cause if he wants to. The sooner we find out who is guilty, the sooner I'll get back them golden gim-cracks.

Dicky

I don't believe this man is guilty.

Screwby

Well if he isn't, the girl is. They both made threats, didn't they?

Dicky

Threats? Well, what if they did, you made threats yourself.

Screwby

What?

Dicky

I heard you, myself say that you'd either have your money, or the jewels. Or, you'd have old Haynes heart's blood.

Screwby

I only said that because I was mad. I had no motive for crime

Dicky

Motive? Why you'd do anything for money.

Rose

You're right, Dicky. He'd murder his grandmother with a saw.

Screwby

(With dignity) You are discharged, Mr. Bird.

Dicky

All right Screwby.

Screwby

And I want to tell you, I'm going to sue you for the value of that locket and chain. You're the last one I trusted them to.

Dicky

You infernal old Decapod crustacean. What the devil do you mean?

Rose

Hold up, Dicky, you can't help matters by mussing him up now. Tell the coroner, what he said. Tell the coroner! Tell the coroner!

Blossom

(Re-entering from house) The Jury has come back and reports their finding, and I am directed by the coroner to take your Mary Haynes, and you, John Hayward into custody.

John

What does this mean?

Blossom

It means that - that woman - Mary Haynes is held for the wilfull murder of her father and you John Hayward are held as her accomplice. Will you go peaceably or must I summon force. (Advances towards Mary, Rose interposes, Mary fainting on bench)

John

Don't lay a finger on her, if you value your life. (Swings Blossom around R. He bumps into Dicky)

Dicky

(Swings Blossom around Right, and bumps him into Screwby) What he says, goes!

Blossom

What, do you defy the law?

John

No, but Mary is innocent, Listen everyone! Here before you all I rake the whole burthen of this murder upon myself. I alone am guilty, I killed Pelham Haynes, without help of any one.

Omnes

You?

John

Yes, I - and I stand ready to answer for the crime to God and man.

Dicky

John Hayward, you're to be honored for your sacrifice, but all the same, I think you're a damned liar.

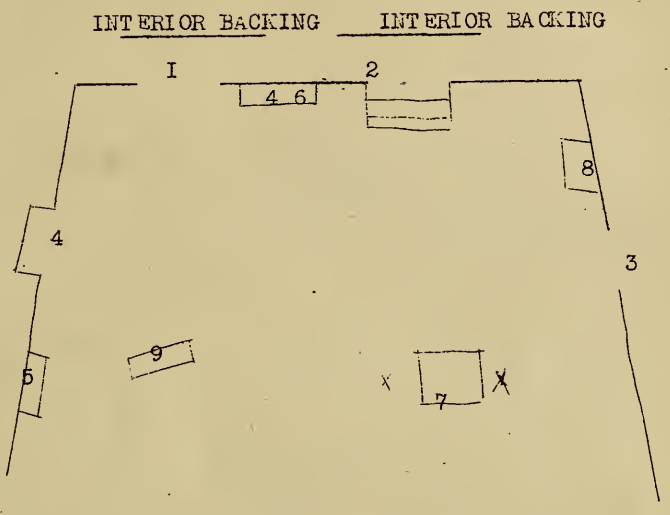
Picture and Curtain.

John

Dicky
Blossom
Rose
Mary
Screwby
Florence
Middleton

ACT III

SCENE:--Miss Summer's Cottage. A comfortably furnished Interior.



(I) Door R of C. up at back. Interior backing. (2) Door L of C. with steps leading up, a platform running off L. Interior Backing. (3) Door in L. Boxing. Interior backing. (4) Large window, practicable on R. (5) Fire-place down R. (6) Large clothes. Press with drawer up back T C. (7) Table and chairs. (8) Side-board with glasses etc. (9) Sofa. Lamp on table. Locks on all doors with keys.

Act III

Scene:-
Miss Summer's Cottage. A comfortably furnished interior.

At Rise:--Rose and Florence discovered. Florence is seated by fire-place, gazing into fire. Rose is over at table sewing on a pillow slip.

Florence
And so Dicky is coming back to-night.

Rose
Yes, so he writes, he's arranged all his financial affairs about his inheritance.

Florence
He will be a very rich boy now.

Rose
Yes, but I don't think it will change him a bit?

Florence
No, Dicky is not one of the kind that Money changes.

Rose
While we are on the subject, Florence, I would suggest that you ought not to call him "Dicky."

Florence
Why not, he calles me "Flossie."

Rose
Yes, ahem! (coughs.) I know, but you see someday he may be your uncle?

Florence
(In dismay) My "uncle" why how is that?

Rose
Spare me my blushes, please child. (stitches vigorously) Of course Dicky hasn't proposed to me yet, but I feel something is going to happen during his visit this time. Of course, I'll have to accept him.

Florence
Accept him (bewildered.) Aunt Rose what on earth are you talking about? Why you are old enough to be Dicky's mother.

Rose
What? What? Nothing of the kind. My heart is still young. My experience has been limited. I have never been a flirt, but I can diagnose my own case when I am affected by what the French call a "Grand passion."

Florence
And you think Dicky is affected also.

Rose
Why not? Else, why should he return. Ah, my heart answers, it is because of me, his little Rose. You will understand now Florence that when our marriage takes place how disrespectful and improper it will be for you to call him anything but "Uncle Richard."

Florence
"Uncle Richard" Dicky? Oh!

Rose
There now. (Holding up pillow case.) In talking to you I've made a botch of this. This will never do for you "Uncle's" bed. Never mind! Dicky shall have some I embroidered with my monologue, when I was going to marry the "Corn Doctor."

Florence

Your grand passion for the "Corn Doctor" didn't turn out very well, did he?

Rose

No! The perfidious wretch, I discovered that he had five wives already. He was a rascally remorseless, rapacious roue.

Florence.

You discovered his villainy in time?

Rose

Oh yes, he borrowed money of me, then stole my spoons and ran off with my servant girl, and married her. I might have forgivan the theft, but I could never forgive his lack of taste. However you must remember that most men are villains. Look at that horrible wretch who murdered your father, that John Hayward, and there is Mary still crying her eyes out about him.

Florence

Mary don't believe John is guilty, and neither do I.

Rose

Then why did he confess he was?

Florence

He took the crime upon himself for her sake. To my mind he is a hero.

Rose

Well anyway, he'd never treated me with respect, and I hope Mary will soon forget him.

Florence

She never will, and I shouldn't if I were in her place. I pray as she does that someday the mystery will be brough to light and John Hayward will walk free among his fellow-men. I know too that Dicky feels the same way.

Rose

Don't call him # "Dicky." (Irritated) How often must I remind you that he is to be your uncle Richard. Dicky indeed. How do you know how he feels. Drat it! Here it is seven o'clock, and I've neglected going to the store to give that groceryman a piece of my mind. This comes of gossiping with you. Now as long as you live, Florenec remember--"Dicky" is only Dicky tto me, to you--he is "Uncle Richard." (exits L)

Florence

Yes, Aunt. (Florenece rises picks up photo of Dicky from mantel piece where it rests against clock. She sinks into chair again holding photo. Dicky Bird enters R U E he carries a couple of suit cases, overcoat, cane, umbrella, golf sticks, shot gun and other traps)
(Looking at photo.) Oh, you dear old boy however can I call you Uncle. (Dicky starts about to drop bags, but lays down everything carefully and guiltily comes down softly behind her, looks over her shoulder, smiles as he recognizes his own photo)

Florence

What a noble brow. (Dicky throws out his chest, pushes hair back from forehead and pos es)

Florence

But alas, he has no brains. He makes a grand front but there is nothing behind. Poor misguided boy. I adore you. I don't care how foolish you are. (Kisses picture vigorously)

Dicky

Hold up! Hold up! Don't waste those, I want 'em every one.

Florence

Ah! (Rising with a little suppressed scream)

Dicky

No use in kissing my picture when the original picture is here. Oh Floss, Floss, co me to your Dick's bosom. (Grabs her and kisses her, she struggles and releases herself)

Florence

Don't--don't--stop.

Dicky

I don't intend to stop. (advances on her)

Florence

Oh, you must. (Running away.) She--she is there. (Pointing L)

Dicky

Who is she?

Florence

The future Mrs Bird?

Dicky

What kind of a bird?

Florence

Mrs Bird--(Pause.) My Aunt.

Dicky

She's an old bird. I don't know what you're driving at. What sort of a welcome is this you are giving me?

Florence

Uncle Richard.

Dicky

Eh, what's that?

Florence

Uncle Richard. Welcome to our city. (Holds up hand with high society air)

Dicky

City? Oh Tanks. (takes her hand)

Florence

(Offended.) What do you mean by "Tanks."

Dicky

When you call burghs like this, cities, I always say "Tanks" But what is this Uncle Richard gag?

Florence

If you marry my aunt, you will be my Uncle Richard won't you?

Dicky

Marry your aunt? Marry your grandmother?

Florence

Aunt Rose expects it. She says, that's why you are coming back home?

Dicky

Oh she does, eh?

Florence

Your intentions, she takes for granted by your attentions.

Dicky

(Grabs up baggage.) What time does the next train leave town?

Florence

Where to?

Dicky

Anywhere?

Florence

What! Are you going to leave me? I mean us?

Dicky

No, I'm going to take you with me?

Florence

Oh Dicky?

Dicky

Oh Flossy! Come hurry up. Let's get a gait on.

Florence

I can't.

Dicky

Do you want to be my uncle, I mean, my niece.

Florence

Never.

Dicky

Then let's chase. I tell you, I'm afraid of "Rose" She's a determined woman. She may make me marry her, she's of that kind.

Florence

Oh, what shall I do?

Dicky

Beat her to the game, marry her. I mean marry me, yourself.

Florence

Oh Dicky.

Ficky

Hurry up. I'm going to give you the first chance. Say "Yes." (Pulls her to him and kisses her, just then Rose enters, sees action. As Florence draws back, she also catches sight of Rose glaring at her)

Florence

(stammers) Oh "Uncle Richard" you are so good.

Dicky

Uncle Richard again. What the dev--

Florence

There is Aunt Rose. (Pointing L)

Dicky

Eh, Aunt Rose. (Turns.) Hello Aunt Rose. How dod you think you feel? (extends hands)

Rose

Sir? (Dicky staggers back.) What is the meaning of this extraordinary behavior?

Dicky

Why I--

Florence

Dear Aunty, he was overjoyed at getting back, and when I called him as you told me "Uncle Richard" he kissed me.

Rose

Yes, I saw that.

Florence

Yes, he kissed me with an Uncle's kiss.

Rose

My Uncle never kissed me that way.

Dicky

Probaly he wasn't in my class. I mean he wasn't my kind of an Uncle.

Rose

Probaly not.

Dicky

Yes, you see my joy at my return, I was excited and the news that I was an Uncle.

Florence
yes, everytime I called him UNCLE he tried to kiss me.
Dicky
(aside) Traitress!

Rose
I don't see that you evince any joy at seeing me, Mr. Bird?
Dicky
Joy! Why I'm tickled to death?
Rose
I have a little errand in the village, and the night is coming on, probaly you might give me your escort?
Dicky
I should be delighted, but in getting off the train, I sprained my hand and can't walk?
Rose
You needn't walk on your hands, Dicky.
Dicky
Did I say hands, I meant, I sprained my uncle, I mean my ankle, see. (walks around stage lamely)
Rose
But, I'm timid in the dark, when I'm alone?
Dicky
Carry a lantern, and I'll swear you'll be safe.
Rose
Never mind. Florence shall accompany me.
Florence
Now Aunty!
Rose
Go and get your hat?
Florence
But--
Rose
Go and get your hat.
Dicky
But I feel timid myself when I am alone?
Rose
Mary shall entertain, while we are gone. (Goes to steps and calls) Mary. Mary.
Mary
(Outside) yes, Aunt Rose.
Rose
(
Come Down Dicky Bird is here. Florence, go and get your hat. (Florence pouts and goes to steps exits passing Mary who enters)
Mary
I'm glad to see you back, Mr. Bird.
Dicky
(Forgets his lameness walks over briskly to her.)
Thank you Miss Mary?
Rose
Marvelous.
Dicky
Eh?
Rose
Your ankle is well.
Dicky
Why, of course. (suddenly remembers and walks lame again) No it isn't. (groans.) Oh! There's an awful twinge again. Why did you remind me of it. It was cruel. Oh. Oh. Oh.

Mary

Why, what's the matter?

Rose

Dicky has sprained his wrist, or his foot or his conscience, or something--

Dicky

That's right, make fun of me. Oh Rose! What a sweet rose you'd be if you had no thorns.

Rose

Humph. (Florence re-enters pinning on hat.) Come Florence we will not be gone long.

Dicky

(has been helped over to sofa by Mary whom he draws down besides him.) Don't hurry on my account.

Rose

(angrily.) Come along Florence. (Grabs Florence roughly by wrist. They exuent R U E)

Dicky

Now Mary, tell me all the news?

Mary

Well- --Jack--(pauses)

Dicky

Yes--

Mary

His trial comes off next week?

Dicky

Yes, I know, that's one of the reasons why I have hurried back. We must do what we can to save him.

Mary

Ah, you have always believed in his innocence.

Dicky

Yes, and I'm ready to back that beliefe with my money, of which, thank God. I have a sock full now. I have thought of many plans the most sensible of which I think is to prove him insane.

Mary

What! (Rising)

Dicky

Sit down and listen. You and I both know why he took your father's murder on himself.

Mary

Yes, he feared I was in danger.

Dicky

So you were with that hayseed jury, and if at this trial he goes before another dozen of boneheads, and they take his confession as that of a sane man, they give him the limit which in this state is imprisonment for life. Now I have secured six or seven of the most prominent Alienists we have in the country who will swear that a man isa en or insane, whichever side they're retained upon. Through this expert testimony, we will prove Hohn Hayward is a "Paranoic# and send him to an asylum.

Mary

He would never consent.

Dicky

He couldn't help himself, why those experts coula even prove that I was weak-minded.

Mary

No, I dont doubt that, but--

Dicky

Humph! As I said to Flossie a little while ago, Tanks.

Mary
Have you any suspicions as to who really murdered my father?

Dicky
I can't say that I suspect any particular person, by the way, how is Screwby?

Mary
The report around the town, is that he is losing his mind. He is spending money right and left, hints at being a Rockerfelle or some other king of finance. He has already mortgaged our house, which he bought in at the foreclosure sale.

Dicky
Oh, I know that.

Mary
You?

Dicky
Yes. (The honk tonk and noise of an auto heard outside comes to a sudden stop)

Mary
Who can that be?

Dicky
(Goes to window R.) It's an autocar and it's stopped here. Well--well--well--ralk of the devil.

Screwby
(outside.) Mary Haynes. Mary Haynes. Are you there.

Mary
(goes to window L.) Yes, what is it?

Screwby
I saw your aunt and sister passing down the street are you all alone?

Mary
(hesitates.) Why--(pausing)

Dicky
Say "Yes" I'm nobody.

Mary
Yes.

Screwby
All right. We are coming in?

Dicky
We?

Mary
There is someone with him. Who can it be ? (Goes to door R U E. John enters Screwby following)

Mary
(screams) John! John! You! (Business they embrace) Oh John, heaven is merciful you are free?

John.
As far as a figutive from the law can be, Mary. Mr. Screwby here has aided my escape. His auto car broke down outside and I insisted on seeing you. Mr. Bird. (saluting Dicky)

Dicky
I fear you've done a very foolish thing Mr. Hayward. You've rather crippled the defense I planned for you. We were going to prove you a lunatic, and have you sent to an asylum?

John
Thank you. That's very kind of you?

Screwby
He ain't no lunatic, he knows more about mines than any man in this state. He's going to work for me. I get him cheap cause he's a fugative, from justice, and I need him in my business.

John.
A fugitive from injustice, Mr. Screwby, though, I thank you just the same. But we must be on our way.
(Mary cliggs to him.)

Screwby
I'm glad you're back Dicky, and I hope you and I are friends because I heard that you've come into a lot of money and I need it in my business.

Dicky
What is your business, you damned old spendthrift.

Screwby.
Discoverer of gold mines. I'm the boy to find them. I find gold where no one thinks of fidning it. Say, what do you think of that? (Produces a lump of coal.) Look at that, and then look at me, and tell me if you see a yellow streak.

Dicky
I know all about the yellow streak in you, Screwby? It's a broad one, but this lump of coal. (Looks at it.) By George tha t's funny. (Loud knock on door R U E which Mary has fastened)

Blossom.
(outside.) Open in the name of the law. Open I say or I'll break in the door.

Dicky
(To John) Up stairs. Quick. (Pushes John off L U E locks door after him puts key in pocket)

Blossom
Open I say (Hammering on door)

Ficky
It's Blossom, let him in. (Mary unlocks door Blossom with drawn pistol and followed by Middle-tone enters R U E)

Blossom.
(Looks around) Where is he? Where is he?

Dicky
Where is who?

Blossom
John Hayward.

Dicky
(Innocently.) I don't knww?

Blossom.
He was in your gasoline buggy, Screwby. This man seen him, give him up. Give him up, or I'll arrest you as his accomplish. (Screwby ducks behind table)

Screwby
Don't be so careless with that gun, Jerry. If it goes off you may shoot me, and I have big prsopects.

Blossom.
I don't keer! You helped him to break jail, and I'm going to have him dead or alive. (Runs off L 2 E)

Screwby
(To Middleton.) You measly skunk. You put Blossom up to this, because I fired you out of my get-rich-quick scheme. You swindler. Youyou--

Blossom.
)re-enters.) He's not in Rose Summers room. Maybe he's up stairs. (Goes to door L U E up steps.) Why the door is locked.

Dicky
Yes, I generally keep it so.

Blossom
You?

Dicky

Yes, it's my portion of the house?

Blossom

Where is the key?

Dicky

In my pocket?

Blossom

You give that key to me.

Dicky

You go to HELL.

Blossom

Then I'll bust in the door.

Dicky

You try it and I'll bust in your face. (Picks upshot gun quickly.) You and I are going to talk on equal terms. Have you a search warrant?

Blossom

I don't need none.

Dick

I have six loads in this pump gun that say you do. Now I'm speaking for good. If John Hayward isn't there you'll lose your job sure, but if he is there and you force that door, you'll lose your life, because he comes from a country where they have no compunction in killing a two legged rat like you, then we have in poisoning the four legged ones.

Middleton

You wait here, Blossom, and stay on guard while I go for help. (exits door R U E)

Blossom

Oh, I'm a good watch dog all right.

Dicky

Blossom, you talk like a Wiener Wurst. What's the matterwith your car, Screwby?

Screwby

Slipped a nut, I think?

Dicky

I'll go take a look at it. I'm the kandy kid when it comes to "cars" (Opens bagand takes out electric lantern.) Mary, you shall hold the light. Here Screwby. (Pulls out bottle of whisky from bag.) Have a drink on me , while I'm gone. (Screwby takes nottle.) Keep an eye on Blossom there, and see that he don't steal the spoons) Come Mary. (Exuent Dicky and Mary R. U. E. Business, Screwby looks at bottle removes cork smells bottle, smiles in gratification, goes up to side-board and gets glass. Blossom watches him closely Screwby comes down to table sits right of same, pours out drink big drink all this is done very deliberately. He is about to take a drink when Blossom walks over touches him on shoulder with left hand, holds pistol in right carelessly pointed at Screwby, Screwby trembles and lays down glass)

Screwby

Say don't point that thing at me, you make me nervous.

Blossom

You voted the prohibition ticket last election.

Screwby

Yes.

Blossom.

I didn't, but as an old friend, I can't suffer you to go back on your party. (Lifts Screwby out of chair pushes him down in front of table, takes Screwby's drink, and takes Screwby's seat.) Ah! That's good stuff.

Screwby

(L of table.) Don't I get any of it?

Blossom

Get yourself another glass. (Screwby goes up to dresser gets another glass, comes down back of table. Blossom lays down pistol brushes off pillow case from table. Screwby picks it up looking at it. Blossom pours himself out another drink, as he is about to raise it to his lips, Screwby quickly pulls pillow case over blossom head and shoulder, pioning his arm to sides, then as Blossom struggles to his feet he grabs him from behind and boots him off L 2 E into Rose's room shuts the door and locks it leaving the key in the door. Blossom beats on door outside)

Blossom

(outside.) Let me out. Let me out.

Screwby

Shut pu that noise, or I'll shoot you through the panel. (re-enter Dicky and Mary)

Dicky

You car is all right. Where's Blossom?

Screwby

Locked in Rose Summer's room?

Dicky

Good. Now to get Hayward away, while there is time. (Runs up steps L. U. E. unlocks door at back.) John. Quick. Make you get away while you can. (John enters hastily)

John.

God bless you Mary. Good-bye for a time. (embraces Mary)

Mary

God watch over you John.

Screwby

Hurry. Hurry. (exits R U E John follows. Mary goes to window) looking out, noise of automobile and horn heard growing fainter and fainter)

Dicky

(Goes over to table, picks up bottle and about to take a drink sees Blossom's revolver picks it up laying down bottle) Blossom gun. I wonder how old Tight Wat managed it. (struck with sudden though.) Screwby's lump of coal. (takes it from pocket, examines it.) It looks like gold all right. Where on earth could he have found this?

Rose

(outside.) Well, it's funny, whoever they were that they didn't stop. (enters with Florence) How's your ankle, Dicky Say, didn't I see an automobile leaving here?

Dicky

It is likely you did/

Rose

Who was in it? (Pause, looks at Mary who remains silent then to Dicky.) Don't I smell whiskey?

Dicky

It is likely you do. I certainly smell the awful stuff. (In disgust.) Horrible. Horrible. (smells bottle puts it back on table)

Rose

How did it come here?

Dicky

Your visitors left it?

Rose

My visitors?

Dicky

Yes, those creatures who were in the automobile. Oh Rose. Rose. Rose. Who would ever think it. Who would ever think it. (sinks in seat covers his face with his hands).

Dicky
Why, what's the matter Dicky?

Dicky
Don't ask me, Rose, don't ask me?

Rose
Does your ankle hurt you?

Dicky
It's not my ankle. It's my heart, my heart?

Rose
And I am to blame.

Dicky
No, I don't blame you, but I am hurt, I am hurt.

Rose
(Looks at him puzzled then turns to Mary and Florence)
I wish you two girls would leave me alone with Dicky. Can't you see that two is company and four is a mob. He has something to say to me.

Mary
Come Florence. (Mary and Florence exuent up stairs L U E)

Rose
Now Dicky, we are alone. Tell you little Rosey what's the matter. Please boy, please.

Dicky
So far and yet so false. Away. Away perfidious woman. I never can trust you again. Never. Never. (Jumps up crosses R Rose clings to his coat tails.)

Rose
What have I done?

Dicky
What have you done, what have you done. I know all--all.

Rose
All what?

Dicky
They did not think to find me here to-night.

Rose
Who? Who?

Dicky
Your visistors?

Rose
I ask you again who are they?

Dicky
I hate to call their loat;some names, now that you prefer them to me.

Rose
But I don't. Who are they?

Dicky
Screwby for one?

Rose
What, the old devil. I'd a scalded him if I'd been here who else?

Dicky
Blossom, and Middleton.

Rose
Blossom, and he came here, he had the gall.

Dicky
He is here now?

Rose
What? Where? Where?

Dicky
In your bed room, Madame! In your bed room. He's gone in there to take a nap.

Rose

(screams) What?

Dicky

He claims he has perfect right, he defied me. I couldn't bandy words with the rum soaked ruffian. He is now enconsed in the scared precincts of your boudoir, which I always regarded as a holy temple. Oh Rose! Farewell! Farewell, I can never trust you more.

Rose

Oh you're wrong, Dick, wrong?

Dicky

(crossing L.) Wrong? Wrong? There is his hat. (Picks up hat from chair.) There is the weapon with which he threatened me as his hated rival, and if you want more proofs, behold them in the man himself. (Unlocks door. Blossom enters and sees Rose, stands aghast)

Rose

(Hysterically.) You villian! You scoundrel, you'll try to ruin my character will you? (Rushes for Blossom who dodges under her arm going right)

Blossom

Stop her! Hold her! Hold her!

Rose

You'll sneak into my bedroom, will you to take a nap. I'll put you to sleep forever. (Picks up pistol commences furing Blossom takes a flying leap through window, glass crash she chases to window, Middleton enters door R U E)

Middleton.

What are you about? (Rose turns and shoots at him he dodges out, Mary and Florence enters screaming, Rose has hysterical fit in chair screaming, beating her feet on stage. Mary endeavoring to hold her)

Florence

Oh Dicky. Dicky.

Dicky

Kiss your Uncle Richard. Florence. Kiss him. Kiss him. Kiss him. (Lifts up Florence, kisses her as cutain descends)

C U R T A I N

2nd Picture:-

Rose is still in hysterics.

Mary

Oh, what shall we do for her?

Dicky

(hands bottle.) Give her some of this. That's all I can do. (Hugs florence again, Mary holding bottle in despair Rose screaming.)

C U R T A I N

ACT IV.

SCENE:--Set the same as Act Ist. Except one of the "and iron" is gone. Picture at the back hangs by one wire, and there is a box of matches with the heads all burned off, a bo -uquet of flowers in vase o n mantel, all withered and scorched coal scuttle is off right ready for Screwby to carryon) (Clock is not going on mantel, the hands point to eight o'clock. Two flower pots with plants in C window) At Rise:--Screwby is standing C John Hyward is seated L. of table)

Screwby

And you mean to tell me that gold is never found in a coal mine?

John

Never in my experience. Gold is the most universal of metals and after all the least of utility. You can't make tools of it it's too soft. It's only useful in the decorative arts. It's indestructible, it has the value.

Screwby

And you tell me to my teeth, it's not found in coal mines.

John.

Oh it might be found anywhere. They say it's in the water of the sea, but the expense of extracting it would hardly be profitable, and perhaps it's just as well, for if it would be easily and cheaply produced, it would soon lose it's purchasing value, according to the ratio of it's abundance. Food products would go up in price. The useful metals would increase in value. There would be a catachysm in the finances of the world, everything would be in chaos, but to return to the coal, why do you think it is found in coal? (Knocks at door)

Screwby

Hush. Back to your hiding place, quick. (Goes to L U E) John exits R)

Screwby

Who is it?

Dicky

(outside.) It is I, Dicky Bird. Open the door, quick.

Screwby

(Opens door, Dicky and Florence enter)

Screwby

What's this. Why I thought you were alone?

Dicky

No Screwby not alone, never no more. Behold in this lady Mrs Dicky Bird who is to be as fast as we can get a clergy man to make us one.

Screwby

What?

Dicky

Behold in us two loving hearts who have runned away?

Screwby

Anelopement.

Dicky

Yes, Florence is going to save me from Rose.

Florence

Dicky, Dicky how you go on?

Dicky

You know Rose wants to marry me, and she's a determined woman. Screwby, is your phone working. I want to call up the reverand Mr. Dubey.

Screwby

Yes, but I always charge a nickel when an outsider uses my phone.

Licky

(Feels in pocket and pulls out bills.) Flossie give Screwby a nickel please. (Florence reaches in bag and gives Screwby a coin which he examines carefully and then puts in pocket. Dicky rings up phone)

Dicky

Hello. Hello. Yes, Central, give me Doctor Duby, will you, yes, 4.II--44. Hello. Hello. (pause.) Is that you Doctor Dubey, yes. Well this is Dicky Bird talking. I want to get married, what's that. I said I want to get married. Oh, I'm so foolish am I? Well come over to the old Haynes place at once eill you? Si Screwby is living near here, now. Yes, what, you were going to go to bed. Nonsense, don't go to bed unless you have nothing else to do. Why, you're sleepy? Never mind, come anyway. Thank you. Thank you. (hangs up phone) He says he's sleepy?

Screwby

Oh Dubey's always sleepy. Say, you've got my lump of coal.

Licky

Oh yes, here it is. (Produces it from pcoekt) Where did you get it?

Screwby

Aha. (knowingly.) That's the secret. How would you like to come in on good ground floor, I need a hundred thousand dollars, and then I'll have millions--millions.

Dicky

So, they've trimmed you at last, eh. I thought they would ah, poor Screwby?

Screwby

Trimmed me? Me! Ah! Ha, ha, ha.

Dicky

Where has all your money gone?

Screwby

Invested my boy--invested--

Dicky

In what?

Screwby

In the mines, where this came from. Do you see those yellow streaks. It is gold. Gold. Gold. (Holding up lump of coal)

Dicky

I'm an expert.

Screwby

Ah, but John Hyward is, he says it's gpld. Look at those veins, look at 'em I say. They stretch through the whole lump, why that speciman alone, would assay a thousand dollars a ton.

Dicky

And you have mortgaged this house to get the money, to pursue this will of the Whisp--this dream.

Screwby

How do you know, I've mortgaged this house.

Dicky

A little bird told me. Say, what have you done with Hayward?

Screwby

(Mysteriously.) Hush! He's not far off, I start him to-night to West Virginia.

Dicky

West Virginia?

Screwby.

Screwby
Yes, where this comes from. The railroad has abandoned the spur to my mines and I want you to invest some of the money you have inherited, to help me force them to re e stablish the service.

Dicky
Screwby, you'll be in a padded cell shortly, if you don't get 2hep" to yourself. Let me see Hayward. (Screwby impatiently points to Florence)

Dicky
What are you pointing at Florence for. Don't you trust her (knock on door L U E.) Ah, perhaps that's the clergyman.

Florence
Oh Dicky--I--I want to go home, I want to go home.

Dicky
Your home is here. Honeybunch on your hubby's manly chest (Draws her tohim)

Screwby
Oh Slush. (knock again)

Middleton.
(outside) You'd better open this door. Screwby if you know what's good for you.

Screwby
It's the "con" man, Middleton.

Dicky
Let him in.

Screwby
But--

Dicky
Let him in.

Screwby
But he will try to extort money from me.

Dicky
Lead him on to do it, give it to him. And Flossie and I will witness the operation, and we will send him up for blackmail

Screwby
But I haven't any money in the house.

Dicky
I'll lend you some here. (hands him some bills.) There's a couple of hundred. Flossie and I will hide in here. (Puts his arm around her and leads her off R door. They exuent)

Screwby.
(Grumbling.) Damn it all. Damn it. Damn it. Damn it.

Middleton.
You'd better hurry up in there.

Screwby
(Goes to door L U E opens it Middleton and Blossom enter)

Middleton.
Are you alone. (crosses over R)

Screwby
(C) No, I mean yes.

Blossom.
(L) I heered you a talkin' in here.

Screwby
I was talking to myself.

Blossom
I heered you "damning somebody.

Screwby
I was saying my prayers. What do you fellows want?

Blossom.
We want to get even me especially. In the first place, what you did to me to-night?

Screwby
I didn't do a thing to you to-night.

Blossom
(L) Well, I'm going to beat you up for it, so look out. (squaring off)

Middleton.
(R) Hold up you idiot. We are not here fot any such fool work There's only one way to get back at this man, and that is touch his pocket.

Screwby
How well you know me.

Middleton.
Now I know all about your scheme about getting Jack Hyward off in orderto utilize his mining talents in West Virginia. I am satisfied that it was he who was in the auto car with you to-night. For all I know, you may have been secreted somewhere around here now. Y ou have placed yourself in peril of the law, Screwby?

Blossom.
That ain't no lie.

Middleton.
And there's only one way for you to squareyourself, and that is--come across. (Holds out hand)

Blossom.
Yes, come across two times. I'm in on this.

Screwby
And suppose, I don't come across.

Blossom.
If you don, you'll sleep in the cage to-night, and Jack Hyward will not got to West Virginia.

Screwby.
And if I do come across.

Blossom.
We will forget everything that happened. I will be deaf-dumb and blind him and Hayward as far as I am concerned can go to--well, I don't care where he goes.

Screwby
What's your idea of coming across. (They look at each other)

Middleton.
Well, I know that you never have much cash, and I guess you're pretty nearly all in now, save you split five hundred between us, and we'll keep mum.

Screwby.
Five-f-f-f-five hundred.

Middleton.
Yes, there's nothing more for me in this burgh, and I want a stake to go elsewhere.

Screwby
Five hundred. Let me see, what means two dollars and a half a piece doesn't it.

Middleton.
Ah, talk sense.

Screwby
That's what I'm doing--five hundred cents is two dollars and fifty cents a piece. I haven't much money as you say, about me. I'll go a little bit better though, I'll give you three dollars a piece, that's more than either of you ever made in a day, honestly. (reaches in pocket. Middleton and Blossom grab him one on each side)

Middleton.
(R) Give us all you have in your clothes. (B usiness they go through him)

Screwby

(C) Robbers. Robbers.

Blossom.

(T.) Shut up, or I'll hand you one.

Dicky

(entering gets between Blossom and Screwby.) If you do Blossom, I'll hand you two?

Blossom and Middleton.

Dicky Bird!

Dicky

Yes, and the witness to your blackmail and robbery.

Middleton.

(Down R.) You'll never live to tell it. (Draws black Jack)

John.

(enters comes down R sei zes Middleton by wrist twists black jack out of his hand throws him down R.) Oh yes he will. Drop your thugs, weapon. Drop it.

Blossom.

Jack Hayward?

John.

Yes, I am a witness also. We caught you with the goods.

Middleton.

You almost convicted murderer, your testimoney will haveno value.

Florence

(enters.) But mine will, Edward Middleton, and I'll testify to the limit.

Dicky

Hooray Flossie. Come and kiss your uncle, I mean your Dicky?

Florence

Dear Dicky (embraces him)

Blossom.

Jack Hayward, I arrest you, you are my prisoner.

Dicky

Too late Blossom. Jack is going to give himself up to the chief of police and stand his trial, but first he has some important business to attend to. Flossy phone over to your sister Mary and have her come here at once.

Florence

(Runs down to phone, rings up.) Hello Central. Give me 177 Miss Summers. Yes, (pause.) Hello. Hello. Who's at the phone? Is that you Mary. Yes, this is Florence. Come over to our old home at once. Jack is here, want to see you. At once. (Hangs up receiver)

Screwby

That wil l be another nickel. (Florence pays him business as before.) Look a here Dicky. I don't thank you for butting into my business a darned bit Here you've been a coaxing Hayward to go back and acknowledgin' himself to be a malefactor jest because you think y u and your doctors and lawyers can prove him one of them lunatics. That the law calls pyrotechnics, and I need his talent in my business.

Dicky

Your business is your gold dream?

Screwby

Gold Dream. Gold Hell. It ain't no dream.

Dicky

That one LITTLE specimen you showed me.

Screwby

I've got more of them, why I've got a peck and a half. I'll show 'em to you, you derned idiot, you just wait. (Rushes off Right door)

Dicky

John, is gold ever found in combination with coal?

John.

Ah I told Screwby, never , to my personal knowledge. Gold is found everywhere. Edison says that under the City of Philadelphia there is a stretch of clay forty miles long which assays thirty cents to the ton, and in this little belt there is more gold than all the free gold in the vaults of the United States treasury. But mines with our present methods of extration can't be worked profitably when they assay less than three dollars. Even sea-water contains five cents to every cubic yard.

(Nothing Omitted)

I have often wondered at the limited use of gold in the arts and manufactures and it has always seemed strange that the entire financial systems of the worlds greatest countries is founded on a metal of which the only practical use, we make is to gild picture frames and fill teeth.

Dicky

You infer then that if all this gold by new discoveries of working and chemistry can be extracted at a profit.

John

When that time comes, gold will be so cheapmand other commodities so dear, a bushel of wheat will coast about a thousand dollars.

Screwby

(Re-enters with coal scuttle) Look at this! Look at this, aha! And I own the mine this came from.

Dicky

Where did you get it, si?

Screwby

I bought it when I bought this house with it's contenty.

Florence

Why that is our coal-scuttle.

Screwby

Was, young woman! Was. It's my coal scuttle now. Aha! Just look at me and watch me gloat. I'm the richest man in the world. The richest man in the world!

Dicky

(Pause) Poor Screwby! Poor old Scout! I'm sorry for you-so-so sorry. You have accomplished one good thing though, you have found the murderer of Pelham Haynes.

Omnes

What? (Middleton makes a rush for the window C.) (John attempts to stop him)

Dicky

Let that poor picayune pikergo John, he is not the murderer. Go along with you. Get out! You, Blossom stay. (As Blossom attempts to follow Midleton) (Middleton exits window C. Knock on door L.U.E.)

Dicky

That may be the reverand doctor Duby, Flossie! Let him in. (Florence goes to door, L.U.E.)

Screwby

(Holding scuttle) Zicky Bird! I must say, you're taking a lot of liberty in my house.

Dicky

It won't be your house long, Screwby. You know it's mortgaged.

Screwby

Yes, I know, but how the devil do you know? (Enter Mary and Rose L.U.E.)

Dicky

I hold the mortgage that's why. When I heard you were behaving like a lunatic, and throwing away your money, I thought I would seize the opportunity to see that the daughters of Pelham Haynes would come into their own, that's all.

Screwby

Lunatic! Ha! Ha! Ha! (Holds up scuttle) Look at them nuggets. Who's looney now? Ha! Ha! Ha!

Rose

Gibbering Gorilla!

Florence

Hry, Dicky says the assassin of Father is discovered.

Blossom

Well who ever it is, we had better set about arresting him, or her as the case may be. (Produces handcuffs)

Rose

You "shet" up! (Blossom shrinks) Let Dicky talk.

Dicky

The assassin entered through that window. Come here, Mary! Do you see these two flower pots? (Takes Mary to C.) In this one (Taking up one on L.) The leaves are fresh and green. The flower is blooming. In this one, nothing but a withered stump remains.

Mary

It was my beautiful geranium.

Dicky

Ah the assassin in his work of death played some strange mad pranks. He thought it was not enough to murder. That is not damage enough. The picture on the wall attracts him, so he severs one half the wire that holds it on one side, curling what is left around the nail, that's which holds up the picture and then carries it, the severed piece, where does he carry it? (Goes overto fire-place) He carries it over to this "Abd-iron" and wraps it around it. Then he stops the clock on the mantel, and eight o'clock. See the hour Mr. Haynes met his death.

Rose

How did he stop the clock?

Dicky

He "magnetized" it, Rose.

Rose

Who ever heard of such a thing? That's as rediculous as to tell a lady she could stop a clock by looking at it.

Blossom

I've met such a lady, but say this here wire has not been cut, it's welded right on to this and-iron, the ends look as if they had been melted.

Dicky

They were melted.

Blossom

By whom?

Dicky

The assassin, who just burned the heads off all the matches in the box, who withered and scorched all the flowers in this bouquet. Who hurled Mr. Haynes so that he fell with his head on the other "andiron" and made his escape up the chimney.

Blossom

What are you giving us? I should like to see any robber or assassin who could do that.

Dicky

You shall see him in the mooing clouds. His time for work is in the tempest and his mission is swift sure and terrible.

Omnes

His name! His name!

Dicky

It is the lightning.

Omnes

Thelightening?

Dicky

The lightning. That night when we shuddered at the thunder. His work was accomplished. In the turning of a thought, this murderer came and was gone. Mark his footsteps? See, one plant shriveled! The other spared. His sword of five cut the wire from the picture and wrapped it around the fire irons. The clock I have mentioned, the matches. Mr. Haynes death and there is one thing more. Is there a hole in the bottom of that scu ttle Screwby?

Mary

And the diamonds in the locket?

Dicky
They returned to their original carbon.

Mary
God Bless you, Mr. Bird! God bless you. John! They will free you, (Embracing him) Theybwill free you. I thank Heaven, I'm spared the thought that father's blood is on any living creature's soul. Florence! (Mary releases herself from John, the two young girls sob in each other's arms)

Screwby
And there ain't no mere gold where this came from.

John
I fear not, Mr. Screwby.

Screwby
Well, I call this damned low down mean of you Dicky with your thunder and lightning. (Goes over, extreme R. with coal scuttle on knees, looking sadly into it) (Knock on door) Blossom goes up discloses Reverand Mr. Duby.

Blossom
It's the parson, Si, Mr. Dubey!

Screwby
(Growls) Tell him to go to--to them as wants him, I don't.

Dicky
Welcome Dr. Dubey. (Goes to him takes hand) Mary! John! Rose! Florence and I are going to be married.

Omnes
When?

Dicky
Right now, and if you'll take my advice John and Mary, we'll make a double wedding.

Rose
But where do I come in?

Dicky
Go and comfort Screwby.

Rose
Si! (Approaching him)

Screwby
Go away, I've been struck by lightning already. (Looks in scuttle)

CURTAIN

Florence and Dicky together. John and Mary R.C. Dubey up at back, Blossom L.)

SEP 18 1911

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